POLAND, RUSSIA AND GREAT BRITAIN

1941 - 1945

A Study of Evidence

by

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The Polish Republic which was restored to freedom in 1918, found itself between the grindstones of two imperialist Powers. Those Powers—Russia and Germany, bursting with ambition to expand and, after years of preparation, feeling themselves strong enough to fulfil their dream by an armed action, endeavoured to destroy Poland and those other small States between the Baltic and Aegean Seas in order to march, one eastward the other westward, to the edges of the Continent. Both had the definite aim of establishing one great state which was to stretch from the shores of the Atlantic to the shores of the Pacific and was to be a preliminary to the ultimate conquest of the world.

Due to the participation of the Atlantic Democracies in the Second Great War Germany was smashed, while Russia, through the political genius of Stalin, who had not met his match among the leaders of those Democracies, was able to reach halfway across Europe. That belt of States which existed in the Middle Zone between Russia and Germany prior to 1939 (referred to contemptuously by the Germans as "Zone des Debris") was to virtually disappear . . . The front line between the Western World with its leading Atlantic Democracies, and the Soviet World, now stretched from the Beringa Straits (there is a mile of water between Russia and the United States) to India and Japan. On this front line in the most vital European sector, where the whirlwind of war had raged for so many years, Poland's problem was to be the most characteristic—not merely because she had received guarantees from the Allies and because Britain and France had entered the war to maintain her independence, not merely because the Poles showed a particular vitality, not because the Soviets, like the Germans, were to encounter the strongest resistance to their aggression, but first and foremost because, long before the defeat of Germany, Poland had become the test of the solidarity of the Great Alliance. Here was the field where the Two Worlds were to meet, here the Great Powers encountered a problem which could not be settled by compromise. One side would have to give way. The Democracies were brought face to face with the question . . . was Poland to be free?—whether or not to fulfil their guarantees and . . . the thesis of Democracy . . . in other words, did they intend opposing Russian conquest as they had opposed Hitler's aggression?

The Western Powers were at a disadvantage in this encounter, having neither a definite programme for post-war Europe, nor leaders behind the battle far-seeing enough to tackle the world-wide dimensions of the inevitable consequences of a total victory over Germany. Disunited through their egotistical aims and out-witted by the methods of the Russian conqueror they were to connive with the latter's aggression On October 31, 1939, Molotov, the Commissar for Foreign Affairs, commenting on the Russian occupation of half Poland in his report to the Supreme Council of the U.S.S R., stated that the "Western World had had to retreat a fraction" But, in 1945, Russia, as the heir of the Mongol tradition of conquest had taken a gigantic leap into the very heart of Europe, for it cannot be denied that the outcome of the total victory over Germany had merely resulted in a totalitarian Russia straddling dominantly over the Continent of Europe. Since the unity of the Great Alliance seemed of greater value to the Atlantic partners at that time than the independence of Poland, who had set a standard for fighting Democracy, (Roosevelt had claimed it was "the inspiration of the free nations") they were to abandon that country at the height of the battle to this new enemy, and with her all those States between the Baltic and Aegean Seas The extent of this disaster can be judged by the fact that Eastern and part of Central Europe, territories where 150 million people—one third of the peoples of the Western World had been located in 1939,—found themselves in the hands of the Kremlin dictator, shut behind the "iron curtain" as war booty, and under one camouflage or another forced into the Soviet Communist order of life.

Poland, who had been treated by the Germans as their most bitter enemy and who had suffered the wholesale slaughter of her people by the Nazis, on a scale unknown in the other countries, found her situation unchanged beneath this new occupant As the most eminent representative of the Western World on its eastern boundary, she was marked down for destruction, while the residue of her people were to disappear under the oncoming tidal waves of the Russian expansion.

The consent given by the other partners to an enslavement of a free country by another stronger Power while all were at war against the same enemy, and during a war fought in order to end aggression, required the application of methods more ingenious than those normally used by the common aggressor, methods which seemed beyond the understanding of the peoples of democracy. It can be quoted as the sole instance in history where so many and so powerful States, having at their disposal the most potent means devised by modern science, did all within their power to misrepresent the truth regarding an unfortunate country swamped by a new occupant — to conceal the facts, distort information, destroy its press, silence its radio, slander

its leaders, and finally deprive that country of its Government in an effort to disguise their own deals and to stifle the qualms of conscience striving to rise to surface in their nations. It has been far from an easy task to show the peoples of fighting democracy how this free nation, which had entered the Second Great War in an alliance, found itself totally prostrated and in chains, still being persecuted and its people exterminated when that war had been won, and its Allies were celebrating their victory. This unprecedented blackmail was to culminate in the recognition by the Governments of the Atlantic Democracies of the emissaries of Soviet tyranny, the shadow agents of a foreign invading Power,—who had now switched their Headquarters from the Moscow Comintern to Lublin, as eminent Polish patriots, while the real leaders of this nation who had conducted its struggle against the Germans for five and a half years, were brought to trial in the invader's capital and stamped as traitors to their own country, and the Allied cause, or put to death without even the pretence of a trial.

But freedom can be served only by truth. And the most bitter truth of the outcome of the Second Great War is that with the enslavement of the Polish nation and its neighbours, the area ruled by the Western law has substantially decreased and the area of slavery has substantially increased . The destruction of Europe means the automatic defeat of Britain, for her long term policy of preventing any one Power from becoming supreme on the Continent is rendered useless. It also heralds the destruction of the sense of security existing on the American Continent. Russia is drawing close to the shores of the New World and for the first time in history, the peoples of Canada and the U S.A. feel the icy gusts of a new and terrible danger approaching. For even while the war against the Axis was still being waged, the Fifth Column agents of the new aggressor were landing on the soil of America to clear the road for fresh and greater conquests.

This volume is a record of events which led up to this disaster for the Western World, but it is not a judgment . . . It was written while the battle still raged, while the events were in state of being. In many instances few documents were available and the rapid torrents of history in the making, ravishing and destroying the most valuable assets of humanity, have on occasions thrown the sequence of events out of perspective. The dominant endeavour of the author has been to collect such evidence as belonged to the Polish problem . . . The work gives a decisive picture of the methods employed to crush Poland and those countries forming the eastern buttress of the Western World, methods of sufficient interest to be described in detail since they surpassed any which had been employed here-to-fore by aggressors

The volume covers the relations between Poland and Russia on one hand and between Poland and Britain on the other during a period of four years, beginning from the Russo-Polish Treaty of 1941 until

the Crimean Agreement and the recognition by the Allies in the summer of 1945 of the Soviet sponsored "Lublin Committee" as the Polish Provisional Government.

The history of the relations between Poland and Soviet Russia prior to that time, i.e., from the coming to power of the Bolsheviks, the establishment of the Polish Republic in 1918 and the Anglo-Polish relations from the spring of 1939 are available to the reader in the volume "Russia and the Polish Republic," referred to in the text as "Volume I."

I.—WORDS AND DEEDS

DANAOS' GIFT

Timeo Danaos et dona ferentes (Vergili, Eneida).

On June 22, 1941, Russia was invaded! Attacked by Hitler, she found herself at war with Germany. Did this mean therefore, that she joined automatically the camp consisting of Great Britain and all those peoples of Europe united in a common fight against the Germans? The representatives from this camp were to be the first to yet again stretch out a hand in friendship towards Russia, for on the very day of the attack, Churchill broadcast one of his most significant speeches offering them the assistance of Great Britain.

" We shall give," he said, " whatever help we can to Russia and to the Russian people. We have offered to the Government of Soviet Russia any technical or economic assistance which is in our power and which is likely to be of service to them," and " we shall appeal to all our friends and Allies in every part of the world to take the same course and pursue it," and that " the Russian danger is . . . our danger, and the danger of the United States "

Churchill was inviting the Soviets to ally themselves with Britain and appealing to the rest of the Allies to ' take the same course.' To some of them, however, it was not a course which could easily be adopted. Poland, for instance, had already suffered great wrongs at the hands of Soviet Russia during the early days of the same war, when, together with Hitler, she had endeavoured to eradicate the Polish Republic not only from the map of Europe, but from the very surface of the Earth itself. Churchill was offering support to the Soviet Union unconditionally and without, it seemed, consulting the other Allies (towards whom England held commitments) as to whether or not they were willing to join in this hastily proffered support. There was no question or hint of terms in connection with this help so freely promised, and the opportunity to obtain a clear statement of war aims, and an explanation from Russia regarding her attitude towards the neighbours she had so sorely misused—Poland and the Baltic States—was lost. After Churchill's speech, the Polish Government could only ask themselves whether Russia, in accepting

Britain's offer, would express a wish to be an ally of Poland and would redress the wrongs she had already inflicted on that country.

As a victim of Soviet aggression, the Polish Republic was formally at war with Russia, but whereas Poland had continued her fight against the Germans by taking part in the Battle of France, the Battle of Britain, the Campaign in Norway and in the Battle of the Atlantic and Africa, as well as in the fierce fighting of the Underground Forces within her occupied territories she had ceased her fight against the Russians.

According to the last order of the Polish C.-in-C the Poles had indeed never even desired to do battle with that country. Invaded by the Soviets at the most critical moment in her struggle against Germany, the acknowledged enemy number one, Poland, against her will, had become entangled in a conflict with the Soviet Union. In point of fact, the Poles had no cause whatever to fight that country, both Powers had already arrived at a settlement of their grievances in the Riga Treaty. The action of Russia, however, after her invasion of Poland—the deportation of Polish citizens, the plunder of their land—had by no means been conducive towards the friendliest of sentiments for the Soviet Union.

The first of the Russo-German battles began on Polish soil, in June, 1941, and the first communiques contained names of well-known Polish towns. The eyes of the world involuntarily rested upon the Poles and on their Government, established in London The sentiments of the free peoples towards Poland were expressed by Eden, the British Secretary for Foreign Affairs, when he stated in the House of Commons, on June 24 : " At a time like this our thoughts go out with heartfelt sympathy to our Polish Allies. Once again their soil is a battlefield ; once again their people suffer for no fault of their own The Polish people have had a hard history. By their courage in a time of unparalleled ordeal they have earned and they will redeem their freedom. That remains our pledge ! "

But in addition to these sentiments the world attentively awaited the next move—how would the Poles react to this new situation whereby the Soviets, their erstwhile foes, were now to become potential allies? The Polish people were confronted with a hard decision. It was to be anticipated that, under these circumstances, Hitler would once more attempt to arrive at an understanding with the Poles Indeed, shortly before the invasion of Russia he had tried such an approach, even while carrying out his policy of extermination. Carefully worded promises were extended offering to improve the general situation of the country, but all these attempts on the part of the Germans were unsuccessful The Primate of Poland, Cardinal Hlond, then a prisoner, was offered the position of Regent if he would be prepared to uphold their existing administration. Each politician who was approached in the hopes of finding in him a candidate who would eventually co-operate with the Germans, refused. Certain of them later paid for this refusal with their

lives, men such as Professor Bartel, for instance, the former Polish Prime Minister, who was shot at Lwów. Thus when the Russo-German War broke out in 1941, Hitler was once again convinced of the impossibility of finding any Quisling collaborators among the Poles. Animated by the spirit of goodwill and following up Churchill's offer to Russia, the Polish Government, through the medium of its Premier, General Sikorski, clearly explained on June 23 the existing position. Broadcasting on the same day to Poland he stated that:

" . . . the Nazi-Bolsheviks combination, source of the terrible disaster which had brought about the fate of Poland, had now been shattered. The Polish-Russian question in its present aspect may disappear from international politics.

"At the moment we are entitled to assume that in these circumstances Russia will cancel the Pact of 1939 (with Germany). That should logically bring us back to the position created by the Treaty concluded in Riga on March 18, 1921, between Russia and Poland. The political and moral significance of such an act would be tremendous.

" Will it not be but natural, even on the part of Soviet Russia, to return to the traditions of September, 1918, when the Supreme Soviet Council solemnly declared null all previous dictates concerning the partitions of Poland, rather than actively to partake in her fourth partition.

" For the love of their country, their freedom and honour, thousands of Polish men and women, including three hundred thousand war prisoners, are still suffering in Russian prisons. Should it not be deemed right and honest to restore these people to their country? "

It was a clear and definite offer to the Soviets, and a step towards the creation of a positive relationship between the two countries. In addition, it was also in keeping with the wishes of Great Britain, " a friend of ours in the West . . . for whom the Polish-Russian question in its present aspect . . . might have shadowed the outlook " and " caused noxious friction and clashes ". When Sikorski made his proposal to Russia he emphasised that a united Polish people had from the first been in favour of a peace with the Soviets although, as he pointed out, the Soviets " had been continually collaborating with Germany against Poland, while that country has never yielded to repeated German offers . . . proposing a common crusade against Bolshevik Russia."

Poland was ready to conclude a peace with Russia, but ' a just and a real peace ' which would, to some extent, right the wrongs of the Soviet's invasion of Poland, and which would stabilise future relations between these two sovereign Powers. The Poland of 1941 had nothing to lose but everything to gain,—all her territories had been occupied by the enemy. Indeed, by comparison with the Soviets she possessed an immense advantage in the rightfulness of her cause. To the rest of the world, a world whose help Moscow at that time desperately needed, Poland, united with Great Britain, was from a moral point of view in a strong position. On the other hand, Moscow, who had been expelled from the League of Nations as a confirmed aggressor, was in a questionable one,

for the Soviets, now successfully attacked by the German armies, could hardly expect to encounter sympathy from a world which recalled the past two years ; those two years during which they had permitted Hitler's war-machine to smash and defeat the European countries one by one, while they had in the meantime collected what booty they were able to gather. But now the Kremlin was in urgent need, not only of sympathy from Britain and the U.S.A., but of real material help and Stalin hastily began to justify his previous action in signing a Pact with those ' monsters and cannibals ' the Germans, as being merely a desire for peace. He now gave strategical reasons as the cause of his invasion of Poland . . . but unfortunately for him, current events belied this statement since at that time the Russians had made a lightning withdrawal from Polish territories, from those very same ' strategical positions.'

Polish opinion was split over the question of an immediate agreement with the Soviets, and when Sikorski made an offer on June 23rd, it did not meet with general approval, for the moment was judged to be inappropriate. It was considered that a proposal should emanate from Moscow. For the time being Poland was in a position to wait, since the war was now progressing away from her territories and Britain was then doing her utmost to unite the Powers fighting against Germany in one allied bloc. Poland as the victim of aggression had every excuse to wait for some sign of Soviet repentance but, it was however, a repentance which Russia had no intention of showing. Britain could supply Russia with war material but it was only Poland who could acquit her in the eyes of the world, and it was just this acquittal she needed, when she was losing the first round of the battle.

The offer made by Sikorski was in accord with the British policy but in the opinion of the Poles, he had let their country down, particularly as it appeared that Moscow was in no hurry to make any acknowledgment. Consequently among a great section of the Poles a feeling of bitterness was aroused towards their Premier

At this juncture it is necessary to say a word regarding Sikorski He was born near Lwów, in that part of Poland which had never belonged to Russia. He fought against the Soviets in 1919-20, and had scored a notable success as the Commander of an Army He was essentially a European and tackled every problem concerning Russia from the angle of a Westerner, without any real understanding of that country or the Bolsheviks Sikorski assumed that by laying his cards on the table, it would be possible to come to a sincere agreement with the Kremlin, but, in fact, the sole element which could influence the future attitude of the Soviets, not only towards Poland, but also towards Great Britain, was the outcome of events on their front line—victory or disaster. As far back as 1940, after the collapse of France, Sikorski had suggested to Churchill that the British Government should put forward a proposal to Russia that

the Polish prisoners-of-war and deportees might be formed into an army for use against Germany But this plan was far from any possibility of realisation, for the Kremlin was at that very time at the climax of its policy of the extermination of the Polish race and the mass deportation from occupied Poland and the disappearance of Polish prisoners-of-war had by then reached their greatest height.

It appeared that the Soviets were even more surprised by this peace proposal made by the Polish Government on June 23rd, 1941, than by Churchill's offer of the previous day Twenty-one months before, they had " finished with Poland," and in the Treaty concluded with Germany referred to her as the ' former Poland.' However, on June 23rd, the voice of this ' ghost ' was suddenly heard on the radio—Poland still existed and it seemed they would now have to take her into account in their schemes. So definitely had the Kremlin decided that Poland was ' finished ' that it had not even considered itself to be in the state of war with her. If the Kremlin were now to talk with this ' phantom ' Polish government in London, the existence of which it had hitherto refused to recognise, the two years work with Germany to destroy Poland would automatically be cancelled. Therefore, Moscow did not vouchsafe a reply to Sikorski's offer. The British Government may have exerted a certain amount of influence on the Kremlin over this matter, but the ceaseless German blows on their front line would have to be very much stronger before the Soviets would think fit to answer.

The seemingly quixotic offer of the Polish Premier became less fantastic as it began to assume the proportions of reality with every passing day. At the end of two weeks when the first line of the Russian armies (over a hundred divisions) had been cut into sections and smashed, when the Germans, driving forward five hundred kilometres, were approaching Orsha on the Upper Dniepr, near Smolensk, and when the Russians were faced with the same catastrophe as Poland had faced in 1939, and France in 1940, then and then only, did the Soviet Ambassador inform Eden, on July 4th, 1941, that Moscow was ready to begin negotiations with the Polish Government.

Fear of responsibility is one of the most predominant features of a people living under a despotic regime. But, while on the one hand the inferior is terrorised by even the possibility of assuming any responsibility the ruler on the other hand cannot afford to admit his errors. Therefore, while Russia might be willing to admit a military defeat, she was never anxious to acknowledge a diplomatic failure. Although in point of fact it would have been no sacrifice for Moscow to resume diplomatic relations with Poland, (since after two weeks of war Germany had driven her from Polish soil), it was a great sacrifice of a dictator's pride. And, judging by the Russian standards it would have proved extremely embarrassing,

the more so since Poland did not at that moment, present any material force to be reckoned with. But the Red Army was then in retreat and the Kremlin decided it was necessary to relinquish the hostile attitude towards Poland, a Poland which might now in some way be exploited in this war

From that moment the Soviet policy towards Poland was to correspond proportionately henceforth with the outcome of events on the Russian-German front and to the varying importance which Moscow attached to its relations with Britain and the U S.A. The Kremlin had to reckon that the crisis on the Russian front would now last until the winter. The weather, the ruthless measures adopted by the Russian High Command after the Red Army had lost one thousand miles in depth, combined with the lengthening of German lines of communications, at last arrested the advance of the enemy When this crisis had passed the Soviet Government rapidly altered its decisions and behaviour with regard to the Polish Government in London and towards the Poles in Russia.

On July 5th, the first meeting took place at the British Foreign Office between the Polish Premier, General Sikorski, the Polish Minister of Foreign Affairs, Zaleski, the Soviet Ambassador, Maisky, and Cadogan, British Under-Secretary of State All parties were anxious, though not in the same degree, to conclude an agreement. The Kremlin was the most concerned . it was receiving desperate communiques from the front and, waiting for the position to improve, was in the meantime endeavouring to find a way to retain ' de jure,' the booty taken in 1939 from Poland by ' droit de conquérant,' while simultaneously giving every evidence of general goodwill.

Britain, the second party, was also most anxious in her turn, to see this agreement completed. She wanted the coalition to reach a real understanding and at the same time to fulfil the obligations resulting from her Treaty of Mutual Assistance with Poland. The decision of the Polish Government was hastened for the reason that as they had no access to the man-power available in Poland (the Army created in France had suffered severe losses while in that country), the sole chance of re-building the depleted forces was from that stock of Polish man-power locked in Russia, those unfortunate Polish citizens and prisoners-of-war who had been deported into the depths of Siberia. Each additional hour's delay meant death to some of the men, women and children These people were pawns in the Soviet's game, and the Russians used them in a manner calculated to influence the outcome of that meeting.

The negotiations in London did not attain any success The Polish Government demanded as an essential condition that " the relations between Poland and the U.S.S.R. should return to the same basis as those of pre-war times " (before August, 1939), and asked for indemnities for the people who had suffered so much through the Soviet's action.

Moscow, however, endeavoured to support its pretentions to the possession of half Poland, as far as the ' Molotov-Ribbentrop Line ' Since the Russians would not accept the formula presented by the Polish Government, the latter then proposed a new one, namely " that all the treaties as to territorial changes in Poland concluded by the U S.S R , from August, 1939, had lost their validity "

On June 24th, the negotiations passed to Moscow where Sir Stafford Cripps, British Ambassador, after talks with Molotov and Stalin, finally compounded a formula which seemed acceptable to the Poles. The Kremlin insisted, however, on the point being clearly stressed that, ' not all treaties ' but only the ' Russian-German Treaties of 1939 ' were to be affected by the agreement. The Russians put forward as the leading argument for their version of the treaty " difficulties which would arise in their internal policy should they ostentatiously change the front of their foreign policy to any great extent."

Anyone with any knowledge of Soviet life will no doubt realise that an argument such as this was not feasible when coming from a country ruled by a man who was answerable to none

On July 30th, 1941, Sikorski, " facing a choice between active co-operation and a policy of the *chien creve au fil de l'eau* " and " seeing no third course," as Stronski, Polish Minister of Information afterwards declared, signed this new Polish-Soviet agreement in London in the presence of Churchill and Eden Maisky signed for the Soviets. The Polish Minister of Foreign Affairs was absent from this scene. He had resigned on July 25th.

The Germans were now approaching the line of the Narva on the shores of the Finnish Gulf (near Leningrad)—Crimea. The fact that " Kiev and Odessa still remained in Russian hands" was of consolation to Moscow.

The text of the Agreement was as follows ·

" The Government of the U.S.S.R , and the Government of the Republic of Poland have reached the following Agreement :

" 1. The Government of the U.S.S.R. recognises the Soviet-German treaties of 1939 as to territorial changes in Poland, as having lost their validity. The Polish Government declares that Poland is not bound by any agreement with any third Power which is directed against the U.S.S.R.

" 2. Diplomatic relations will be restored between the two Governments upon the signing of this Agreement and an immediate exchange of Ambassadors will be arranged.

" 3 The two Governments mutually agree to render one another aid and support of all kinds in the present war against Hitlerite Germany.

" 4 The Government of the U.S.S R. expresses its consent to the formation on the territory of the U.S.S.R. of a Polish army, under a Commander appointed by the Polish Government, in agreement with the Soviet Government, the Polish army on the territory of the U S.S.R being subordinated in any operational sense to the supreme command of the U S.S R , upon which the Polish army will be represented. All details, as

to command, organisation and employment of the force will be settled in a subsequent agreement.

" 5. This Agreement will come into force immediately upon signature and without ratification.

" *Protocol.* The Soviet Government grants an amnesty to all Polish citizens now detained on Soviet territory either as prisoners-of-war or on other sufficient grounds, as from the resumption of diplomatic relations."

After the signing of the Agreement the British Foreign Secretary, Eden, handed General Sikorski a Note couched in the following terms :

" On the occasion of the signature of the Polish-Soviet Agreement of to-day's date, I desire to take the opportunity of informing you that, in conformity with the provisions of the agreement of mutual assistance between the United Kingdom and Poland of August 25, 1939, His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom have entered into no undertaking towards the U.S S R. which affects the relations between that country and Poland. I also desire to assure you that his Majesty's Government do not recognise any territorial changes which have been effected in Poland since August,1939.

General Sikorski handed a reply to the British Foreign Secretary to the effect that .

" The Polish Government take note of your Excellency's letter, date 30th July, 1941, and desire to express sincere satisfaction at the statement that His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom do not recognise any territorial changes which have been effected in Poland since August, 1939. This corresponds with the view of the Polish Government, who, as they have previously informed His Majesty's Government, have never recognised any territorial changes effected in Poland since the outbreak o the present war."

The next day, Sumner Wells, Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, on behalf of the United States, made a similar declaration to Britain, namely that

" the United States did not recognise any change in her (Poland's) status as a free, sovereign and independent Power . The Polish-Russian Agreement is in conformity with the policy of the United States, which does not recognise any territorial changes made by aggression."

Did recognition of the fact that " the Soviet-German Treaties of 1939, concerning territorial changes in Poland had lost their validity," mean, therefore, that Poland and Russia were both returning to their frontiers ?

The Russian occupation of half of Poland had never been recognised by any of the Powers, apart from the invaders themselves, i e., Russia and Germany. Already by July 30th, 1941, when the agreement was being signed, Russia, who de facto had possessed that region for twenty-one months by *droit de conquérant* had been expelled from it by the new conqueror, and her previous ally Germany. Furthermore, Russia, of her own freewill, had renounced this territory when she signed the agreement with Poland. Although the word ' frontier ' was in point of fact never mentioned in the text of the Agreement, it could obviously be concluded that the frontiers of Poland were now *de jure* where they had been in August, 1939.

Speaking on the Agreement, General Sikorski remarked: "Not all questions have been settled between Russia and Poland in the present agreement, but a basis has been provided for useful collaboration. The future will depend on the good-will of both sides. They possess that good-will."

In this last sentence, Sikorski spoke rather prematurely on behalf of the Soviets. Russian diplomacy invariably wants to read an entirely different meaning into the text when it comes to the fulfilment of its political obligations. Poland had already experienced this fact after the signing of the Treaty of Riga.

The same history was repeated on July 30th, 1941. After this agreement had been signed, the Soviets immediately changed the tune of their speeches. Maisky had employed all the familiar phrases and compliments, "friendly feelings towards the people of Poland," and "the common enemy" and "expressed the hope that the Russians and the Poles will fight side by side against the common foe, and this would pave the way to a firm and solid friendship between the two peoples . . " but simultaneously he was careful to declare, "it is not time to speak about frontiers; it will be settled when the time comes to build a new Europe on the basis of 'self-determination of the people'."

It is difficult to assume that in saying these words, which, after all, were normal Soviet phraseology, the Russian Ambassador could have forseen the future Soviet action. This slogan of 'self-determination' was to become for some long time the main one employed in their foreign policy. At any rate, in his speech, Maisky had interpreted the Treaty in his own way and thereby aroused a query regarding the frontier.

When announcing the signing of the Agreement, Eden told the House of Commons that:

"the Soviet-German Treaties of 1939, concerning territorial changes in Poland, have lost their validity The attitude of His Majesty's Government in these matters was stated in general terms by the Prime Minister in the House of Commons on September 5th, 1940, when he said that His Majesty's Government did not propose to recognise any territorial changes which took place during the war, unless they took place with the free consent and good-will of the parties concerned. This holds good with territorial changes which have been effected in Poland since August, 1939.

" . . As to the future frontiers of Poland, as of other European countries, I would draw attention to what my Right Honourable Friend said in the speech to which I have referred."

The relevant passage in Churchill's speech reads:

"We have not at any time adopted, since this war broke out, the line that nothing could be changed in the territorial structure of various countries On the other hand we do not propose to recognise any territorial changes which take place during the war, unless they take place with the free consent and good-will of the parties concerned."

On the same occasion, Captain McEwen (Con), put the question.

'Am I right in assuming that, as a result of this Agreement, no guarantee

of frontiers in Eastern Europe will be undertaken by His Majesty's Government ? "

Eden replied : " Yes, sir The exchange of Notes which I have just read to the House does not involve any guarantee of frontiers by His Majesty's Government

Manders (Lib.) : " On the question of the guaranteeing of frontiers, surely the existing guarantee to Poland holds good?

Eden : " There is, as I have said, no guarantee of frontiers "

The problem then arose, had Britain guaranteed the frontiers of Poland or not ? Had she, or had she not, guaranteed some of them ? The partners of the Anglo-Polish Treaty had committed themselves to the defence of each other's independence (*see* Vol. I, p. 160) The independence of a state is indissolubly linked with its territory and frontiers, and the assumption that in the event of necessity, the independence of the partner will be defended, but neither his frontiers nor his territory, renders any undertaken commitments inefficacious and levels them to mere nothingness In that case one party could claim that it had carried out its commitments towards the other in the alliance, so long as that partner upheld some sort of independence whether in the Western or Soviet interpretation of this term, and although this same partner might have been reduced for instance, to half or less even of its territory

Sikorski had left the Foreign Office after signing the Agreement convinced that the frontiers of his country and her territory were guaranteed The Anglo-Polish Treaty of 1939 and its unpublished Protocol (disclosed in the House of Commons on December 15th, 1944 by Petherick, which " further reinforced the obligations of H M.'s Government to the Polish nation") did not touch on the problem of frontiers. The Protocol explicitly expressed, and the point was understood by the signatories, that by ' European Power ' was meant Germany It was not embodied in the published text of the Treaty, but it was understood at the time that the guarantee embraced Poland's Eastern frontier as well. But Eden's subsequent discussion with the M P's. revealed that the Foreign Office thought otherwise. In fact, his explanation showed that Churchill's England felt more than a little uneasy over the strength of the pledges given to Poland by Chamberlain's Government, and that this was an opportunity to casually loosen the bonds of the Anglo-Polish Treaty. While Moscow's envoy had not received any actual commitments from the British Government, he was at any rate able to read between the lines, that Britain did not seem to be unduly concerned one way or another over this problem. The majority of the well disciplined British Press upheld the official view in this matter.

The Times expressed the opinion that the Polish-Russian relations had now changed into that of a close and active alliance and that " the determination of the new frontiers is wisely left over until the end of the war." *Daily Telegraph* underlined the fact that the "Agreement makes no attempt to define the frontiers of future Poland, which will emerge after the war." The Spectator in the *Sunday Times* considered that, " perhaps the most

serious mistake made by British statesmanship in 1919 was its failure to appreciate the importance of Poland . . . Britain . . . has an honourable obligation to see, as far as she can that Poland emerges from the war territorially not worse off than she entered it. But this does not exclude some compromise over the Russo-Polish frontier if she receives substantial Baltic enlargements at the expense of Germany." *The Manchester Guardian* stated that the " question of Poland's eastern frontier had been left open The future eastern frontier must be made with the free consent and goodwill of both Poland and Russia."

The Editor of the *Nineteenth Century and After* (June, 1943) approached the subject from the legal aspect ·

" The frontiers of the Polish Republic to-day are, *de jure*, what they were in August, 1939. Those frontiers are guaranteed against aggression to-day, as they were in 1939, by the Anglo-Polish Agreement of Mutual Assistance. Great Britain went to war with Germany in September of that year Under Article 3, Great Britain pledged herself—and the pledge has not lost its validity—to support Poland, not only against armed aggression, but against any attempt by a ' European Power ' to ' undermine Polish independence ' by ' processes of economic penetration or in any other way ' In the Treaty of Alliance between Great Britain and Russia, which was signed on May 26th, 1942, both signatory Powers declare in Article 5 that ' they will act in accordance with the two principles of not seeking territorial aggrandisement for themselves and of non-interference in the internal affairs of other States ' By that treaty, therefore, Russia reaffirmed her renunciation of her claim to Eastern Poland

" In the preamble to that same Treaty, Great Britain and Russia reaffirmed their acceptance of the 'Atlantic Charter.' According to Points 2 and 3 of the ' Charter,' Great Britain and United States desire to see no territorial changes that are not in accord with the freely expressed wishes of the people concerned, and wish to see sovereign rights and self-government restored to those who have been forcibly deprived of them "

" It is, therefore, beyond dispute that Great Britain and Russia are pledged to assist Poland in securing her full independence within the frontiers she had in 1939, that the annexation by either Power of any territories within those frontiers is a clear violation of definite treaties, and that Great Britain is specifically pledged to help Poland in resisting any attempt, whether direct or indirect, open or covert, to interfere in Polish internal affairs "

In the U S A. the majority of the Press were, it seemed, in agreement with the Polish version The *New York Times* wrote, " Russia renounced the greater part of her so ill-acquired booty It is quite impossible to think that the Polish-Russian Agreement had to be put on Hitler's credit."

The British Ambassador in Moscow, together with Molotov, compounded the formula to which both parties finally agreed

The Pact, it was observed, did not entirely satisfy the wronged partner—Poland. As the problem of her frontier was raised by an inspired Press the query inevitably followed had the British exerted any pressure on the Poles regarding this Agreement? S. Stronski, Polish Minister of Information, courteously wrote however :

" There was no British pressure, only a very loyal and sympathetic help . . It was the reality of the present situation which gave the affair this pressing

need for haste . . . Russia could not enter the Allied circle without altering her attitude towards Poland who belonged to this same circle, and Poland could not decline an agreement with her."

Churchill, announcing the Anglo-Soviet Agreement in the House of Commons on July 15th, added .

" The Foreign Secretary, in these busy days, has also been instrumental in bringing about a very great measure of agreement between the Russian Soviet State and the Polish Republic. These negotiations have not reached their conclusion, but I am very hopeful that, aided by the statesmanship of General Sikorski, another important step will soon be taken in the marshalling of the peoples of the world against the criminals who have broken its life and menaced its future."

The American Press wrote extensively on this question of pressure, " which the British Foreign Office had exercised on General Sikorski " The Polish public in Great Britain and America came to share this point of view when the Agreement revealed such tremendous Polish sacrifices for the Allied cause The Polish opposition underlined that in order " to ease the situation for his Ally, and to relieve the burden of the English politicians, General Sikorski, in the name of Poland, had taken the decision to forgive Soviet Russia the immense wrongs which that country had inflicted on the Polish people. To help the British out of a temporary embarrassment—not the demands of a far-reaching need—General Sikorski had forgiven those wrongs without receiving any guarantee of their future indemnity."

On July 25th, 1941, the Polish Government of National Unity, which had come into being in Paris in October, 1939, immediately after the occupation of Poland by the united Russo-German forces, split over this Pact. The National Democrats and the powerful Pilsudskyites, joined by a section of the Socialist Party, formed a strong opposition. Sikorski was left with the Peasant Party, a handful of Socialists and a few National Democrats, who were thereupon disowned by their Party

Three ministers left the Cabinet, General Sosnkowski,* the victorious General of 1939, a man who had a great influence in Poland, Zaleski, the

* General Casimir Sosnkowski was nominated on October, 16th, 1939, the Successor-Designate to the Presidency of the Polish Republic.

The name of Sosnkowski has been connected with the efforts of the Polish Nation in their struggle for freedom during the last forty years He began his career as a revolutionary against the Tsar and fought in the 1905 revolution in Russian-occupied Poland in the ranks of the Military Organisation of the Polish Socialist Party Together with Pilsudski, he was instrumental in preparing that batch of men who formed the first Polish troops known in 1914, as the 'Legions.' They fought against Russia until the revolution broke out there, when Pilsudski stopped fighting and dissolved his corps. Pilsudski was arrested by the Germans and with him Sosnkowski Together they spent over a year in the Magdeburg jail, from where they were liberated by the advent of revolution in Germany.

At the time of the war with Communist Russia, Sosnkowski was holding the post of War Minister and he was the man who, in a ruined country, was able to form an army of over a million, the army which enabled Pilsudski to check the Bolshevik

Foreign Minister, a politician of unique experience, who, up till then, had been censured, more for his willingness to compromise than for his impulsiveness, and finally the Minister Seyda, who had always been one of the most enthusiastic seekers after an understanding with Russia Each of these three Ministers feared that the formula employed in the Agreement, and more particularly the fact that the question of Poland's frontiers had not, (as heretofore in every Russo-Polish Agreement) been mentioned, could be variously interpreted by the opponent when the time for the territorial settlement in Europe drew near

For the Poles, it clearly meant a return to the frontier of the Riga Treaty as it existed in 1939, while the Soviet Government, according to Zaleski, might conceivably argue as follows " The German-Soviet Treaties have lost their validity, but our claim to the possession of the Eastern provinces of Poland springs from a different source—the will of the people (expressed in the elections to the national assemblies), who have voted for the incorporation of Western White Ruthenia and ' Western Ukraine ' into the Soviet Union "

The possibility that the Soviet Government might adopt this line of argument could not be excluded And indeed, the ink of Maisky's signature on the Treaty, literally had no time to dry, before he began using this very same argument in his speech

An additional point at issue was the feeling of humility engendered by the term ' amnesty,' which had been inserted in the Pact in connection with those Polish citizens who were deported to Soviet Russia.

It must be emphasised very clearly that this opposition was not directed against the conclusion of an agreement with Russia, but against the ' form which this agreement had taken.' As the Polish opposition pointed out, negotiations should not have been conducted with the help of Great Britain only, but also with the backing and support of the U.S.A. who, though not formally at war, comprised a Power whom the Soviets urgently needed at that time.

Sikorski was attacked from all quarters He vehemently defended himself In his speech a week later on August 8th to the soldiers of the I Army Corps in Scotland, he justified his policy ·

" Negotiations with Russia were most difficult. With the assistance of Great Britain, particularly Mr. Eden, finally all the points which I had

advance into Europe. Sosnkowski was recognised to be one of those men responsible for the victory of 1920 He was Minister of War from 1927-1931, and later the Commander of the Army As the Commander of the Southern front in the campaign of 1939, he was the first Polish and Allied military chief to gain a victory over the Germans, smashing the armoured corps ' Germania ' near Lwów In a long-lasting battle he fought until the end and when his army was finally destroyed (and the Russians had entered Poland) and his road to retreat cut off, Sosnkowski accompanied by a few men, made his escape, passing through the Carpathian mountains

In Sikorski's Government Sosnkowski had been the liaison Minister between that Government and the Underground in Poland, but after the pact with Russia he resigned.

submitted as the terms of understanding were at length passed by the Soviets. There is not one word in the Agreement regarding the surrender of even an inch of soil in the East. Whosoever suspects me of bartering this soil should remember that I myself am a Freeman of the cities of Grodno and Tarnopol, should recall 1918, and my share in the defence of Lwow and Wilno . . . That I was also the Commander of the Army in Grodno when the Wilno affair was settled . . When I was formerly Premier the problem of the eastern frontier had been solved. Would I therefore give up those territories or overlook their importance?

" Certain sections of the public are impatient regarding the employment of the word ' amnesty ' in the Pact, but it is only among those who are living in comfort . . but those who have at length been released in Russia through this Pact are not concerned over such prestige."

Would the text of this Agreement now permit the Soviets to advance certain far-reaching suggestions? The Germans had already expelled the Russians from the part of Polish soil in question, therefore it would seem, that for the time being, at any rate, this dispute had assumed a character purely academical, but what of the future? Had this omission to include a paragraph definitely emphasising the frontiers, weakened the political position of Poland?

None would think to question the stability of the frontiers of France, Belgium or Czecho-Slovakia, but, by not receiving any pointed reference in this Agreement, the Polish Eastern frontier had become a subject for future dispute.

Was Russia ready in July, 1941, to acknowledge once again the existence of Poland's frontiers beyond any possibility of argument? There can only be suppositions on this point Such an acknowledgment in itself would have been against the principles of Russian imperialism. Since however, their position on the front seemed catastrophical at that time, the Red Government, might perhaps, had they been faced with a determined attitude on the part of Britain as well as Poland, have agreed with the Polish formula regarding the frontier. But when the war was in its first phase of 1941, no one had been concerned over the question of the Polish or any other frontier, since it was generally understood, and Maisky had emphasised when signing the Agreement, that such problems would be settled at a future peace conference. Indeed, at that time, even the Kremlin was of the same opinion on this matter. It seems that the U.S. Government at that juncture had been prepared to extend even more definite commitments regarding the frontiers of Poland, but once this Agreement was signed, Washington had no further remarks to make on the subject for the time being.

The Soviet propaganda managed to present the Agreement in such a manner as to convey the impression that Russia had given every possible satisfaction to Poland The first reaction was the enthusiasm shewn by the Soviet Press. *Pravda* on July 31st, wrote :—

" The Great Russian people and all the peoples of the Soviet Union have great sympathy with the people of Poland groaning under the German

Fascist yoke." And Alexander Lozovski, Deputy Commissar for Foreign Affairs and Deputy Chairman of the Soviet Information Bureau, made the following statement on July 31st:

"The Agreement signed in London between the Soviet and Polish Government's shows that the fraternal Slav peoples are uniting more and more closely in the fight against Hitlerism, which bears on its banner the slogan of the extermination of the Slav people

"The peoples of the Soviet Union could not be indifferent to the fate of the Polish people, because fraternal ties had always bound the peoples of Russia and Poland, who, in the course of a century, jointly fought for their liberation from Tsarist autocracy

" . . The Agreement constitutes first of all an expression of the will of the peoples of Russia and Poland jointly to bring the struggle against barbaric Hitlerism to a victorious end. By this Agreement the Soviet Union has openly stated before the whole world that it stands for the creation of a free and independent Poland, and that it will fight, arms in hand, for the freedom of Poland, for Poland to win her independence, and for the Polish people to free themselves from the bloody regime of Fascist rulers. No doubt, all freedom-loving people will enthusiastically acclaim the Agreement as a pledge of the national liberation and the independence of the Polish State"

Lozovski's statement, was, generally speaking, the beginning of a new line in the Moscow propaganda—the line of 'Panslavism' which included the Polish Nation, since they were also to come under the banner of "fraternal Slav people," a banner flaunted by the Moscow Government When Sikorski signed the Treaty he had not contemplated such a contingency arising and it soon became obvious that a clash would result—and it did, immediately. In a lengthy broadcast to his homeland Sikorski explained the Agreement which he had just completed and presented it in the light of a triumph of a righteous cause.

"In the Treaty of the Third Partition of 1795," he said, "the two Powers, Germany and Russia, vowed that Poland and the Polish name were to disappear for ever. A similar agreement for the annihilation of Poland 'for ever' was concluded in September, 1939. That first treaty was cancelled by the judgment of history This new treaty did not last a couple of years. Such documents are only scraps of paper in the face of the vitality and dynamism of our nation

"The present Agreement only provisionally regulates disputes which have mutually divided us for centuries. But it does not permit even of the suggestion that the 1939 frontiers of the Polish State would ever be in question. It does not allow of any idea that Poland has resigned anything It restores normal conditions between the two States and recognises equal reciprocity of assistance It permits us to form Polish military units from the Polish prisoners-of-war who have been hitherto languishing in Russia and yearning to fight for Poland, it accepts a representative of the Polish Commander-in-Chief in the Russian supreme command, thus giving us the possibility of influencing the course of operations on a world scale "It restores to freedom all Polish citizens in restraint for any pretext on Russian territory, and allows our representative in Moscow to come to the aid of the hundreds of thousands of exiles now suffering throughout the enormous expanses of Russia

"So, when to-day Russia enters on the road of reconciliation with Poland, and desires a common action against the common enemy, we set about this

task with readiness to forget the sanguinary wrongs. The future fate of the Agreement we have reached will depend equally on the goodwill of the other side.

" God sees into our hearts. He sees their absolute sincerity . . And so, inter alia, the Polish Government could not further hesitate to accept this responsibility, one of historical significance, of signing the agreement with the Soviet Union "

Sikorski had underlined the integrity of the Polish State and the inviolability of its frontiers. But following its usual procedure, Russian diplomacy, having once signed the treaty, immediately began to seek for the weak spots in which to drive the thin edge of the wedge. On August 3rd, *Izvestia* replied sarcastically to Sikorski—in order to impress on him the fact that he had not understood the real meaning of the Agreement, or at least not in the way the Kremlin wanted to interpret it

Izvestia wrote :—

" The tremendous historic importance of the Soviet-Polish Agreement naturally explains the great public interest and vivid response which is evoked throughout the world We are obliged to mention the fact, however, that, in their analysis and appraisal of the Agreement, people sometimes make historical references and attempt to draw historical parallels which are by no means correct. As an example of such parallels we can cite the broadcast of the Polish Prime Minister, General Sikorski, on July 31, in London

" In his speech he drew a parallel between the year 1795, when ' two great powers, Germany and Russia, vowed that Poland and the Polish name were to disappear for ever,' and the year 1939 when ' a similar agreement for the annihilation of Poland for ever ' was concluded.

" The events of 1795 were the direct result of co-operation between Europe's then most reactionary states, which had united to fight against revolution and movements of national liberation.

" This also means that there is not, and cannot be, any similarity between 1795 and 1939. The entry of the Soviet troops into Eastern Poland in 1939, took place in conditions when, as Molotov noted in his speech on September 17, 1939, Poland had become a convenient field for all sorts of unexpected events which might create a menace to U S S.R

" In the Soviet-Polish Agreement of July 30, 1941, the Soviet Government has recognised that the Soviet-German Agreement of 1939 concerning territorial changes in Poland has lost its validity By this is emphasised that ' territorial changes ' are not eternal and that frontiers established by such ' changes ' are not immutable For instance, we do not consider immutable the Polish-Soviet frontier established by the Treaty of Riga in 1921, nor do we share the view that ' no one dares to presume that the borders of the Polish State of 1939 may be questioned,' as expressed by Sikorski in his speech "

This answer left no room for any further doubts on the matter The Soviets had signed an agreement with Poland because of the existing situation on their battle-front, but at the same time they were careful to leave themselves a margin, should victory be achieved, for their avowed intention of fixing the frontiers in accordance with their own wishes.

Was this Agreement with Poland, Danaos' gift from the Kremlin's overlord during a period of mortal fear? Had the wine of concord and friendship been tendered in a poisoned amphora?

AN ARMY IN EXILE

" It was not easy to give arms to the former foe, neither was it easy to take arms from the former foe."—Ilya Ehrenburg.

On August 2nd, 1941, the Polish Military Mission—General Szyszko Bohusz, Major Bortnowski and the Secretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Arlet, were sent by plane from London to Moscow with instructions to contact the Soviet authorities, and learn the conditions and circumstances appertaining to the creation of a Polish Army on Russian soil. The first object of their mission was to see that the release of the Polish citizens from the prisons, labour camps, and places of exile where they had been thrown during 1939-1941, was effected with the greatest possible expediency.

The Polish Government had anticipated raising an army numbering about 300,000 men or even more This assumption was based on the facts known by them and confirmed at the time by the Soviet Press. According to their information, over 300,000 Poles had been taken prisoners of-war, and roughly 100,000-200,000 conscripted to the Red Army by the Soviet authorities during the spring of 1941, in Eastern Poland. In addition to these two groups, there were among the Poles who had been deported to Russia during that same period, a few hundred thousand able-bodied men of military age. The Polish Government was anxious to restore their army to its full strength, and to augment the number stationed in Great Britain This opportunity to utilise man power which, through the variations of war, had been buried in Russia and to convert it into troops, meant the possibility of building up a real Polish military force, which might, to some extent, influence the future issue of the war. It was not the first time that the Poles had built an army of their own people abroad. The national anthem of the Poland of to-day was the popular song of General Dąbrowski's Army, formed in Italy during the time of Napoleon chiefly from the prisoners-of-war In the same way during the First Great War, one of the Polish armies was re-built in France and Italy and under similar circumstances an army had been formed in France, in Britain and in the Middle East during the Second Great War.

It was a well-trodden path for the Poles, and there would be no difficulty over gathering their soldiers in Russia to the flag of the Polish Republic The prisoners-of-war would gladly become soldiers once more !

A prisoner-of-war already in Russia, General Wladyslaw Anders, was appointed Commander-in-Chief of this future Army. He had served in the Russian forces during the First Great War and knew the country well Severely wounded (not for the first time during his career) in a battle

against the Germans in September, 1939, he had finally been captured by the Soviets and, as a prisoner-of-war had spent over twenty months in their prisons, first in Lwów and subsequently in Moscow's notorious prison, Lubianka. Upon receiving his appointment he was personally released by Laurentia Beria, the all-powerful Commissar of Internal Affairs, and although weakened by the hardships of Soviet prisons he immediately took part in the negotiations with the Russian authorities

The Szyszko-Bohusz Mission flew via Archangel to Moscow and was received by Vyshinsky, Vice-Commissar for Foreign Affairs, who welcomed them with the words that, "since the two Powers were now beginning a new common life, all wrongs (i.e., all wrongs which the Russians had inflicted on the Poles) must be forgotten"

The Polish representatives were soon to learn from their first conversations with the Russians that the Kremlin's object in allowing the creation of a Polish Army was entirely different from the intentions of Poland in this matter. In fact, the Russians made it obvious that they only desired the formation of a small unit. Moscow had been somewhat embarrassed by the fact that Hitler the 'monster' and 'cannibal,' had announced a 'crusade' in Europe against 'the Asiatic barbarism,' and had collected around him the troops of a dozen nations It was to be expected that although small in number, some of these troops would soon appear at the front German propaganda had given much information regarding these Spaniards, Frenchmen, Italians, Hungarians, Rumanians, Norwegians, Danes, Slovaks, Croats, Chorvats and Finns, a retinue of many nationalities, which was soon to include Ukrainian and even Russian anti-Bolshevik troops under General Vlasov—while the Soviet Union, "the country of the Internationale" stood alone on her battlefront.

The Soviets were more than anxious to have as soon as possible at least one free nation in their ranks on the eastern front, for propaganda purposes, and for this reason only they intended to exploit the desire of the Poles to reconstruct their army on Russian soil. The liaison officers between the Soviet Government and the Polish authorities connected with the formation of these troops, were not the Army officials but the Home Office (N.K.V.D.), who, in the Soviet system of Government, represented above all else, the security of the state. Major Zhukov of the Security troops was the head representative sent from the N K.V.D. while the chiefs of the Russian Army played a secondary role, limited to the execution of the orders received from the Home Office. During the first conversation with the Polish Military Mission, the Chief of the General Staff, Marshal Shaposhnikov, made it clear, that it was useless to "draw up plans for the development of an army on a large scale." It was better to form one small division of 8-10,000 men as soon as possible. That was all the Red Army expected from the Poles,

and to this end, he appointed his second-in-command, a General of the Tank Corps, Panfilov.

The Russian authorities were either unable or had no wish to give figures of the number of Polish prisoners-of-war and other Polish citizens retained in their country. When Sikorski had raised the question of the prisoners-of-war with Maisky in London, the latter had answered that there were about 20,000. The Polish representatives in Russia had only been able to find out that, in the camps of Grazovets, 1,000 officers were under detention, and in Jushsky and Suzdalsky about 10,000 privates ; while another 10,000 were in Staro Bielsk. In addition, they were told " a certain number of officers " had been taken Northward or behind the Ural Mountains. Since the official Soviet communiques had announced and repeated in the Press that during the Polish Campaign, the Russians had taken altogether 300,000 prisoners-of-war among which number were 10,000 officers—an alarming and uncomprehensible difference existed between the quoted figures and the actual number of Poles returned to the Polish authorities. " Every hundred Poles " said Sikorski in his speech after signing the Agreement with Russia, " especially those who have survived the rigours of the existing conditions of life in Russia and have not broken under the strain, are of enormous importance for the future " Not only every hundred, but, every individual person as well, thought the Polish representatives, who were trying to trace their citizens in Russia. But to the Soviets, so long accustomed to negligence with regard to their own people, this anxiety seemed both useless and irritating

" A Polish Army on the territory of the U S S.R." was the text of the Polish-Russian Agreement of July 30th, and the Polish representatives were obliged more than once to emphasise this fact to the Russians, who were not evincing any desire to have a foreign and independent army on their territory, particularly a large sovereign army belonging to Poland. It was not difficult to see that the Soviets had sufficient manpower and weapons for the formation of more of their own units It was only a question of organisation. One outspoken Russian military chief connected with the formation of the Polish Army said, " We are not concerned with your five, ten or fifteen divisions, we have hundreds of our own. If we start to arm your divisions an equal number of ours will have to go unarmed " The only suggestion they put forward was that ' one or two Polish divisions should be sent immediately to the front line ' The Kremlin was anxious to show one European nation at least, who was fighting against the German invaders " shoulder to shoulder " with the Soviets.

The Polish-Russian Military Agreement was concluded on August 14th It was a rather long and vaguely worded document, since neither side could produce reliable figures. The Russians, anticipating a change for the better on the front, where they were still in full retreat, were uncertain how far to go with precise commitments towards the Polish Government.

The Poles, on the other hand, were not sure of the conditions under which the formation of their army would be carried out in the chaos existing in Russia (Moscow appeared to be threatened and its evacuation was then in full swing), or how the Polish soldiers themselves would react after the hardships and misfortunes of their detention in the Soviet Union

The Military Agreement developed and repeated Article 3 of the Treaty of July 30th . that the Polish Army in Russia would constitute part of the sovereign forces of the Polish Republic and have all the attributes of a sovereign army, and its members take an oath of allegiance to Poland. The Commander of this army would be subordinated to the Russian Commander-in-Chief during operations on the Russian Front. The army itself would be comprised of volunteers and conscripts from among Polish citizens who had been deported to the U.S.S.R. This conscription was to be carried out by Polish Recruiting Commissions with the assistance of the local Soviet authorities (Article 6) Furthermore, the strength of the Polish Forces was to be conditionally dependent solely on the number of men enlisted (Article 4). Since, during this time, neither side knew how the organisation of this army would progress, it was agreed at first that two divisions were to be formed and one reserve unit—altogether 30,000 men The Soviets insisted that the Poles should be ready on October 1st, within six weeks from the day on which the Agreement was signed. Considering the exhausted state of their men through malnutrition and the ill-treatment which they had undergone in Russia, these conditions were by no means easy for the Poles. But in any case, the final execution of those conditions depended on how quickly the Soviets could supply armaments and equipment. The Red Army was to equip one division, the other was to be equipped through the Allies' aid, namely, from British and American supplies

Negotiations in Washington regarding the extension of the terms of the Lend-Lease Bill to embrace Poland progressed satisfactorily, and after a few days, on September 4th, President Roosevelt authorised the first Lease-Lend aid to the Polish Government, stipulating that the first military equipment was to go to the Polish troops in Canada. On November 28th, General Sikorski stated in an interview to the Press that 50,000 complete British outfits had reached the Polish troops in Russia and 50,000 more were on the way. The U.S A was also sending 60,000 outfits

On August 12th, 1941, the Praesidium of the Supreme Council of the Soviet Union issued a decree which brought into effect the Protocol appended to the Polish-Russian Agreement of July 30th, ordering that all Polish subjects in Russia—prisoners-of-war and deported citizens from Poland, who had been deprived of their liberty, should be set free.

The release from the prisons, the labour camps and the places of exile of the surviving Polish men, women and children, began. They poured out in their thousands, by train, and in many cases came hundreds of miles on foot under the most appalling conditions. They all streamed in one direction

to the central point in the area of the Volga, where the Polish Army was being formed. Many went straight on to Kuibyshev where the Polish Embassy had been re-opened in the temporary capital of the Soviets. In the labour camps some had been liberated by the authorities, others had left their places of exile as soon as the news of the Polish-Russian Treaty and the formation of the Polish Army had filtered through to them and without awaiting orders. These people travelled without food, living on raw potatoes and unboiled water. Food in Soviet Russia was reserved for those who worked and nothing could be obtained, even for large sums of money, without the official cards which indicated the holder belonged to some collective (kolhoz, sowchoz) or factory. Those people were indeed in a desperate plight in that undernourished country Some had to wait for days on the railway stations In most cases their journey lasted for several weeks, even months, much longer than anyone had anticipated. Some of them came from as far away as Kalyma, Anadyr, the Kamchatka Peninsula; from beyond the Arctic Circle, across the Siberian tundra; from the Altay Mountains and Pamir on the frontiers of India All were in a state of extreme exhaustion when they arrived, suffering from dysentry, chilbains and frost-bite, with thin, grey faces and bowed figures; most of them had lost their teeth They were clad in an assortment of rags, barefooted or with their legs wrapped in bits of rags from the remnants of the clothes they had taken with them from Poland.

" Open sores infested their hands and legs owing to lack of vitamins Measles had become an epidemic among the children, followed by bronchitis and pneumonia Many a weary survivor, trailing to the Polish camp, died on the wayside Others died in the arms of their friends a few days after reaching their goal The Polish authorities were not able to collect enough food for the arriving masses.

" Their complete state of exhaustion can be judged from one batch of 1,020 officers who arrived at the Tatishchevo camp. Although they were in an appalling state, it was hoped that they might be saved, but within a month 63 of them had died."*

Cholerton, the Moscow correspondent of the *Daily Telegraph* (October 11th, 1941) saw some of the Poles after their release from places of detention.

" . . They arrive in Moscow very sick indeed," he wrote " How they have recovered physically has been a miracle, a miracle born of their morale, their newly admitted right to fight once more for their land

" General Anders told me about a force of 12,000 Poles which he inspected. They were all still pretty ragged because their battle dress had not arrived. No more than one in four had shirts, no more than one in twenty had overcoats. But they . . . marched . such is the morale of a great nation, greater than ever in adversity "

The Russian authorities supplied food for only the prescribed number of soldiers in the camps and refused to concern themselves with the problem of feeding any of the Polish citizens The daily ration in the military

*" Interview with General Anders " *Polska Walcząca* (The Fighting Poland), November 20th, 1943

camps was half that of a soldier in the British Army. The privates however, renounced their ration one day a week, and the officers, two days a week, for the sake of the Polish civilians; but it was still too little to keep those starving people and the increasing crowds of refugees alive. It was not long before many graves appeared in the camps around the Polish flag.

The first task of the Polish authorities was to save as many of these exhausted people as possible. The strongest only had been able to survive. They were —

"people who had saved their lives by executing their quota of work with their bare hands, those who could not had just died. Those who were unable to live through the frosts of 40 degrees Centigrade, the snow, the blizzards, and the terrible heat of the summer, those died before the eyes of the living. The people who could not overcome scurvy, typhoid and dysentery, who could not cling on to life with all their remaining strength of will, perished Those who could not patiently endure the bars of their prisons—those also perished without trace or echo"

On August 25th, the Recruiting Commission set about its task, beginning with the prisoner-of-war camps and continuing from September 1st, with the labour camps and prisons from which the Russians had commenced to release the Poles Among the officers and privates who came from these places of detention were many who had been sentenced to death by the Soviet tribunals, some, as late as July 7th, 1941; during the time, therefore, when the Soviets were already negotiating with the Polish Government, and even on July 29th, the eve of the signing of the Polish-Russian Agreement in London These people had been vaguely accused of being spies, saboteurs or of carrying out Fascist propaganda, not only in peace-time, but whilst they were in Russia, i.e., when they had been in prison. The prosecutors never troubled to give any proof in connection with these accusations and the sentences of death were imposed en masse. It is difficult to judge what lay behind the imposition of such death sentences and whether it had any connection with the Russian policy towards Poland, or whether it was simply to clear the over-crowded prisons of the frontier zone, including Moscow and the Ukraine. The verdicts in the above quoted instances had not been fulfilled but were changed to a sentence of ten to fifteen years' imprisonment.

"Some day a historian will record," wrote Ilya Ehrenburg, that most eminent Russian writer of this war, after a visit to the Polish camps, "the courage and patriotism of these men who built up an army in exile. All we can say now is that it was not easy to bridge in one day the gulf which has divided Russians and Poles for centuries. It was not easy to give arms to a former foe. Nor was it easy to take arms from the former foe."

Mistrust on both sides was great. The wrongs inflicted by the Soviet Government on the citizens of Poland had been appalling in their seemingly senseless cruelty Yet the Poles were willing to forget all these

injustices. On August 16th, two days after signing the Military Agreement, General Anders sent a report to the Polish C.-in-C., in London, explaining the attitude of the Poles in Russia

"I must admit that the Russian authorities are consistent, if slow. To-day the order for the release of the Polish citizens was published. It seems that it can only be us (we, above all people, who have passed through the Gethsemane of ill-treatment in Soviet prisons, concentration camps and compulsory exile) who can now in any way oppose the efforts towards concord with Russia! But all of us, without exception, are passing over our own personal affairs now that this chance of fighting once more with arms in our hands for Poland, for our country, is given to us The path towards our great aim is clearly indicated This possibility of forming a sovereign Polish Army and of creating along with it the centres of our culture, where we can rescue at least a few hundred thousand Polish citizens, our so precious population (the families of the soldiers, many orphans and children, members of cultural organisations and so forth) from misery is of intrinsic value"*

These were the sentiments of the Poles in Russia. But did the Kremlin really intend carrying out the signed agreement with complete loyalty? And did the Kremlin believe that its 'former foe' or rather its 'former victim' could be trusted?

Both sides had to prove their good intentions and their good-will But since the Poles were indeed physically a very weak partner in the contract, it was to be expected that the Soviets would at least express some form of chivalry towards the peoples of a country with whom they had already broken previous agreements It is worth noting that the Kremlin leaders made it clear from the first that their conduct towards Poland had always been perfectly 'just' and adopted the attitude that, 'they had never invaded Poland,' that they 'had not stabbed her in the back,' and they 'had not deported her population,' emphasising this at every opportunity. Each action of the Soviets, so they declared had 'strictly conformed to the existing treaties' and 'had been carried out for state reasons.'

The Soviets intended to exploit the Polish-Russian Agreement in three ways Firstly, they planned to send some of the Polish troops into the front line; secondly, they wanted to use the Poles in an attempt to organise a revolt in the rear of the attacking German armies; and thirdly, to supply the Russian Intelligence Service with information regarding the movements of the Germans in Poland.

The first objective was fairly straightforward, but the remaining two were not entirely military in character. They also had an important political aspect for, as a consequence, the forces of Underground Poland would have been subordinated to the Russian High Command. All of which went far beyond the bounds of the concluded Agreement, and, as it soon became clear, were quite incompatible with both Polish sovereignty and her national interests.

* *Dziennik Polski* (Polish Daily), London, August 25th, 1941

The intentions which the Kremlin had regarding the Polish Army can be seen from their procedure with the Czechs. On September 27th, 1941, for reasons of propaganda, the Kremlin concluded with the Provisional Czecho-Slovak Government in London under Benes, a similar agreement as that made with the Poles, namely, to form a Czech Army in the U.S.S R. But the number of Czechs found actually in Russia itself was so few that officially they could only form one brigade. In actual fact one small battalion composed of Czechs and Slovaks, supplemented by Carpathian Ruthenians and Austrians (called Sudeten-Germans by the Soviets) came into existence. It was obvious the whole thing was merely a question of ' face.'

Soon General Anders had many thousands of men at his disposal (50,000 at the end of October) and still the flood of returning people went on. And if, in August, the Russians had thought of forming one or two ' representative ' Polish divisions, the Polish authorities now considered that by the end of the conscription, they would have enough men for ten divisions It was obvious from the start, however, that the Soviets did not view the formation of a large Polish Army on the territory of the U.S.S.R., with any great favour. With the commencement of the Red Army's withdrawal along the entire front, the Soviet Government showed a certain tendency towards genuine co-operation with the Poles, but it was merely in the Russian sense of this term. The offices of the Comintern had been sent far away to Ufa in the East, but its Polish Department went to Kuibyshev as the Government obviously wished to keep the latter close at hand.

The Poles wished to build up a genuine fighting force, ' an Army ' as the Agreement of July 1941 explicitly stated, but the Soviets did not have sufficient faith in the Poles to allow them to create such a strong force on Russian soil. They handed out old type equipment and uniforms for one division only, since, according to that Agreement, a division was the smallest unit which could be sent to the front. This division was never given the full quota of modern armaments, it possessed neither anti-aircraft, nor anti-tank weapons, and yet the Soviets invited General Anders to send it to the front line immediately * This was in October, when the German tank armies were still driving eastwards. To send out these troops, so poorly equipped in comparison with the average Russian or German soldier, was to send them to certain slaughter. General Anders made it quite clear he could not undertake such a risk, and asked for normal equipment, in particular for anti-tank and anti-aircraft guns. Except for the division previously mentioned, the Polish Army had no equipment. The needs of a Polish Army were not catered for by Russia.

* When Sikorski inspected the forces in the Buzuluk camp on December 16th, Moscow radio emphasised that all forces paraded and that the infantry was " equipped with anti-aircraft and anti-tank artillery, with guns of the latest types." A statement which was incorrect.

By December, every Polish Division which was created, possessed on an average, forty rifles between ten thousand men, and, in order to keep in training, these men were compelled to drill with home-made dummy wooden rifles. The Soviet Government made a formal declaration to the effect that it was unable to provide armaments for the Poles and this in spite of having so much booty from Poland in 1939. The amount of weapons taken on that occasion had been enumerated by Molotov in his speech at the Supreme Council of the U.S.S.R. on October 31st, 1939—the Russians had taken 300 planes, 900 guns, 10,000 machine guns, 300,000 rifles, 1,300,000 artillery shells and a great deal of other military equipment. This amount would have sufficed at any rate in the beginning, to equip the Polish Army in Russia. The Polish Government could not produce the necessary armaments in the space of a few weeks or even months for this army from any other source. In that autumn and winter 1941, neither Great Britain nor the U.S.A. had sufficient for their own requirements. The supplies of armaments sent by the British to the Middle East and intended for the Polish Army in Russia never reached its destination. An urgent necessity for armaments in Burma had arisen owing to the crisis, and this supply was diverted there. It seemed that only Russia, who had exclusively manufactured weapons during the thrice-repeated ' piatiletka ' (five year plan) possessed arms in what appeared to be an unlimited quantity. But the Soviets had no wish to supply these Polish forces. Meanwhile the Polish authorities were beginning to experience an increasing anxiety. The privates were finding their way back in considerable numbers to the headquarters, but very few officers had so far made an appearance. Where were they? The question was on everyone's lips. As each succeeding day passed in the Polish camps, this anxiety deepened and the silence grew more ominous. " Could it be possible that all had perished? " General Anders now had his troops but no officers and very few N.C Os.—and no information as to their whereabouts.

On the steppe lands near Saratov and Samara (Kuibyshev), somewhere near the Volga river, the first camps of the Polish Army—Tockoje, Tatishstshevo had sprung up. The Army Headquarters were in Buzuluk, 400 kilometres (250 miles) from Tatishtschevo—a great distance when taking into consideration the devastation of the Russian railway system. In fact, under the existing circumstances, it took from four to eleven days to cover the distance. Travelling by car was only safe if a compass was used, for there were hundreds of trails in the snow to mislead the driver. The first snows fell in September and then an intense cold settled over the land. A few barracks in the summer camps were assigned to the Polish Army. These had to be the headquarters, hospitals and kitchens, while the people themselves were obliged to live in tents.

When the Poles began to arrive at Tatishtschevo

" there was no food . . . no equipment . . . no telephone communication with the nearest Russian military centre at Saratov. The railway station

was far away In this camp, on the bare earth, lay those ill-clad and under-fed bands of Polish soldiers Such were the conditions under which the 5th Infantry Division was to emerge "*

Cazalet wrote a description of these camps in the December of that year

"At Tockoje it was very cold, thirty degrees of frost, and there were some twenty thousand Poles in this camp. Every man looked half-starved Their faces were grey, quite a different colour from those of ordinary people. Most of them looked as if they had also been frost-bitten. They were living in tents There were no houses, no wood, except that which they pulled down with their hands, no Y M.C A huts, no cinemas or shops, no town or village to which they could go . . . Many of their companions had died of cold or sheer physical exhaustion in their two long years of imprisonment.

"Yet when these men marched by in their British overcoats, they showed a spirit which was truly remarkable They thought themselves in heaven after two years in labour camps"

It was more than difficult to form divisions from such exhausted people for the immediate action in the front line for which Moscow was pressing. Armaments for this 5th Division arrived slowly, the guns, without horses or carriages had to be pulled many miles into camp by teams of soldiers. Their first task was to build dug-outs as some measure of protection against the terrible frost which fell to forty degrees Centigrade and even lower.

Yet in spite of these hard conditions, units began to form and the training commenced. Ilya Ehrenburg, after accompanying Sikorski, wrote

" I have been for a week amidst the Poles; I have seen them parade in the snow before General Sikorski. The men who marched past us showed marks of deep sufferings, a great human drama was reflected in their eyes. They had lost everything! But they held their rifles with pride. I saw grey-haired soldiers, with long moustaches, and very young boys kissing the rifles they had just received. They were holding the weapons tight in their hands with radiant happiness—as one holds a beloved woman."

Soon after the agreement on July 30th, Russian press and Moscow radio began to appeal to the Polish people to raise a revolution in the rear of the attacking German armies driving swiftly Eastward. In making this appeal Moscow acted entirely in her own interests, and considered neither the circumstances nor the interests of the Polish people themselves. The Polish Underground Army was organised to fight when the opportunity arose. It was a type of army which could undertake a great deal, but only under special conditions, and at the moment when the enemy's morale was shaken. Then, and then only, may the underground army appear on the scene, and when it can within a few days, paralyse the enemy's communications and liaison centres. Such an action had taken place in Poland in 1918, and it was for a similar battle that the Polish Underground Army had been trained since 1939. But the Soviets were demanding that these troops, armed at the most with a pistol or a few tommy-guns, without

* *Dziennik Polski* (Polish Daily), London, June 27th, 1942

modern armament, without artillery, tanks or planes, should go into action against an enemy, then at the height of his success.*

The Russians, with their usual ruthlessness, did not consider this side of the problem, they only wanted an immediate revolt in the rear of the German Army. An appeal of this kind sounded more than extraordinary to the Polish people who had already been fighting for two years. It seemed incomprehensible to hear the Soviets summoning them to revolt. The moral position of Russia after her action during the past two years in Poland's Eastern provinces, could not under such circumstances be strong . . . therefore, Moscow dared not venture to speak directly to the Poles in German-occupied Poland during the first months of her sojourn in the Allied camp. Russian wave lengths broadcast under the name of the Polish Underground, although the Soviet authorities categorically denied that these were their stations " Polish patriots," the Soviet radio station ' Front ' appealed on January 13th, 1942, for instance, " should come into close contact with the Red Army Try to visualise the effect of your revolt now on the enemy ! Imagine what would happen if all Poles began a merciless attack on the Germans ! " It was difficult to visualise in any case, how the Polish patriots could come into close contact with the Red Army when it was in retreat to the Volga. It was easy, however, to understand what the effect of such revolt would have been for the Polish people. As things then stood the German High Command would, in fact, have been extremely satisfied to watch any such move on the part of the Underground, for it meant nothing less than the ultimate capture and elimination of highly dangerous opponents.

Neither the Polish nation nor, for that matter, any other oppressed nation in Europe, awaited a call from Moscow to begin their fight against Germany At that stage of the war none of them would have agreed that such a call corresponded with their national interests. And, circumstances more astonishing still, even as the Russian radio stations were broadcasting these inciting speeches, thousands of Polish soldiers were still held imprisoned in Soviet dungeons

There was another side to this question of an uprising in Poland, namely, that the Russians, during their occupation of her Eastern provinces, had

* Wojtkiewicz Strumph, S., Wojsko Polskie w Sowietach (" Polish Forces in the Soviet Union "), *Bellona*, London, June, 1944, p. 32 ·

The Russians even more ardently than they were endeavouring to have a Polish division on the front, were striving to organise an uprising in the rear of the Germans. Immediately after the first talks with the Chief of General Staff, Marshal Shaposhnikov and General Panfilov, the Chief of the Polish Military Mission, General Szyszko Bohusz, reported to Premier Sikorski from Moscow, that the Soviets had put forward the question of an action within Poland itself, as the first plan. I was in Moscow in the early days of September, 1941, and I observed with the greatest amazement that the Soviets were recruiting our people for this action, and the pressure on General Anders regarding this objective was very strong. The fact that any rising in Poland in 1941, would have been hopeless and would have been paid for with a sea of Polish blood . . was of no concern to the Russians . . . They were following their own interests in this matter

drained her of man-power as much as they could. The Germans in Western Poland had carried out a similar work over the same period. They had detained over 400,000 prisoners-of-war, while about one and a half million men had been transported to forced labour in Germany. It is not difficult to conclude, therefore, that there was, indeed, no suitable force organised at that time in Poland with which to conduct a revolution on any grand scale. The Polish Government could not give orders for any uprising in their country on the scale so desired by Moscow. Since the Kremlin refused to admit the logic of the Poles' point of view, a cause for argument was thereupon established. The Polish Government was energetic in emphasising that the Underground Army could not reveal its identity at that stage, and, furthermore, that it could not be directed by any appeals or orders from Russian radio stations broadcasting in the Polish language

It seems there was disappointment in Moscow over the failure to gain control of the Polish Underground, particularly of its Intelligence Service. It was quite obvious that this service would have had to supply Poland's former enemy and present Ally with material. Complete subordination to Moscow under those circumstances was too much to expect of its members Moreover, such a step was to all intents and purposes impossible. This Service, based on the best elements within Poland, was undertaken by those who, in risking their lives, were free to nominate (in the firm belief that it was for the benefit of their country), the people to whom they would give the fruits of their labour Therefore, Moscow could receive information from Poland regarding Germany, only by the way of London and only information. There could be no question of the Polish Underground Army executing the orders of, or being directed by, the Kremlin. The real intentions of Moscow, however, were soon to be revealed. Dissatisfied with the existing state of affairs, the Soviets began to organise a rival Underground organisation of Communist origin in Poland, who would be prepared to work for them, and not only in purely military spheres either.

By October and November, 1941, the Kremlin still did not seem to have any clear notion as to how they were going to deal with this Polish question. The Soviets had toyed with the idea that, by expressing their goodwill, not so much in actual deeds as by veiled promises, they might be able to pull Poland into the Soviet camp by the hand which Sikorski had stretched out to them in friendliness. To pull her body and soul, and in this simple manner, achieve their long cherished desire of absorbing Poland.

If Stalin was pinning his hopes on Sikorski, then he should have known that the Premier of a democratic nation could not change the natural process of public opinion by the issue of any order, that he was not free to, and indeed, had no intention of harnessing the Polish Nation to the Soviet chariot Only a sincere policy and a responsible guarantee by the Soviets could bring about this so desired change.

" It would be absurd to pretend," wrote Eve Curie, very cautiously expressing her opinion in her diary ' Journey Among Warriors ' (p. 269), after visiting Kuibyshev in January, 1942, " to pretend that anything like a friendship had a chance to develop in the Soviet Union between the Russians and the liberated Poles. There were certain grim facts that only time could shroud in forgetfulness

" How dramatic the Russian-Polish relations still appeared, though, when one examined them, not on the paper, but in their crude and human reality!

" The Soviet ' transfer ' of population (to put it mildly), involving one section of Polish people or more, had had such cruel and far-reaching consequences that it could not be ' straightened out ' within a few weeks or months, even with the goodwill of both the former captives and the former jailers."

The Colonel of the N.K.V.D security forces, Aron Volkoviski, was appointed as the liaison officer to the Polish Headquarters. He endeavoured to penetrate as deeply as he could into the heart of the Polish Army and to unite it psychologically with the Red Army. The first part of his task was easy but he encountered many unsurmountable obstacles in the path of the second, not only because the Poles belonged to the Western civilisation, but also because their experiences while in Russia had left a mark on them which could not easily be eradicated.

The Soviet authorities established a far-reaching net of espionage around the newly created Polish Army. Correspondence was opened and read; there was the instance where Vyshinsky, Vice-Commissar of Foreign Affairs, on May 6th, 1943, unscrupulously quoted extracts to foreign correspondents. Several of the N K V.D agents sent as recruits to the Polish units were unmasked Any information received through the Soviet's Intelligence Service could only convince the Russian authorities that the Poles had their own national ideas In fact, their enforced stay in Soviet prisons and labour camps had not influenced their views in this direction in the slightest, nor had it converted them to the Communist order, a point which Sikorski made quite clear in his broadcast to his people.

There was no mystery about the fact that Poles are, and always will be Poles, and have no wish to be Russian Communists. A determination perfectly comprehensible to every free nation, but a conviction which under the Soviet rule, is synonymous with opposition and revolt against the existing order It is worth-while noting at this juncture that most of the Russian efforts to sow intrigue and discord in the Polish Army and thereby gain the means to intervene in its affairs were not so much among the lower ranks, as among the officer class The mass of Polish soldiers constituted the toughest of men, all of whom had passed through the hell of labour camps and exile and for whom Soviet Communism was now identified with that poverty, suffering and persecution. They were prepared to fight the Germans as they had already fought in 1939 if the condition was freedom for their country and an ultimate return to life as they had known it in the easier, happier times.

Propaganda among these men seemed worthless, and after a few attempts, the N K.V.D. abandoned it in order to make stronger efforts with regard to the officers The latter fell into two categories. The first group consisted of the few who had passed through the same experiences as the privates; and the second were the men who had been detained in prisoner-of-war camps and had managed to survive. Although living under hard conditions they had not been so physically ill-used or so exhausted by starvation as the others,and left together in the camps they had the time and opportunity to discuss their ultimate destiny These could be, and indeed were tempted by the Russians. As far back as the winter of 1939 the N.K.V D tried to seek out among those officers and privates some men who might be induced to join their ranks They discovered about ten officers, several N.C.Os and a number of privates who, still under the influence of the defeat of 1939, had lost their faith in the resurrection of Poland and who showed some inclination towards the Communist creed. This group, led by the retired Lieutenant-Colonel Berling, were removed from their prison camps and sent on a special course near Moscow where they were trained as intelligence agents to be used in German-occupied Poland After the Soviets had concluded the Pact with the Polish Government in 1941, these men presented themselves to the Polish authorities, declaring their loyalty and willingness to serve in the Army They encountered a strong feeling of hostility, but General Anders, however, decided that their former activities and treason must be overlooked for the common cause, and that they must receive the same treatment as the rest. Therefore, they were admitted into the Army, while Berling was nominated Chief-of-Staff of the 5th Infantry Division.

The N.K.V.D., to further its espionage in the Polish forces, tried to make some use of the men whom they had ' trained.' But the followers of Berling were dispersed throughout various units where they could not, or apparently did not wish to do much harm. Some them even confessed to their superior officers the role they were supposed to play When in February, 1942, it had been established without a question of doubt that Berling was in league with the N K V D., his Divisional Commander, General Boruta Spiechowiez released him forthwith from his duties. The N.K.V.D reacted strongly against this action and General Zhukov personally came to the Polish Commander to ascertain the reason for Berling's dismissal.

There were other attempts on the part of the N K.V.D. to intervene in the internal affairs of the Polish Army They evinced special anxiety when a small four-page Polish weekly (" Orzel Polski "—" Polish Eagle ") began to appear on December 11th, 1941. Each editorial was accompanied by strong protests from the authorities of the N.K V.D., not so much for its actual contents, as for what, according to the Soviet authorities, it did not contain. They considered all newspapers published in their country should be Soviet Communist ones, even if written in another

language. Finally, General Anders, in order to avoid further unpleasantness, agreed to submit his weekly to Russian censorship As a result, and since the Soviets could not find any fault in it, every editorial was held up for a long time

Attempts were also made to play General Anders off against the Polish Government in London, the Commanders of the Polish Divisions against General Anders and the younger officers against their superiors, in fact, to create a general web of intrigue and suspicion. However, the Kremlin realised at an early stage, that any action of this type would not promise a great success among the Polish Army and so, in that winter the Polish Department of the Comintern began to work. The Soviet radio which had broadcast in the Polish language disguised until then as an ' Independent Underground ' station, shortly afterwards adopted the name of the Polish national hero, and announced itself as the Soviet ' Kosciuszko ' radio station, and broadcast regularly from the end of November, just therefore at the time when General Sikorski arrived in Russia. One weekly in the Polish language was printed and issued by a Press set up by the Comintern—" Nowe Widnokregi " (" New Horizons ") and from March, 1943, another " Wolna Polska " (" Free Poland ") made its appearance

The Kremlin still wavered in its policy regarding the creation of this Army, and the tendency manifested time and time again was to limit the number of Polish troops then being organised in the Soviet Union. The Russians had given the difficulty of food as a reason, but since they were about to mobilise twenty-five million of their own people, the question of food for fifty thousand was a mere trifle in comparison Finally, on November 6th, the Soviet military authorities presented General Anders with a demand to the effect that only thirty thousand men could be retained in the Polish Army, since only food for this number could be provided. The remainder must be discharged and return from whence they had come A similar statement made by Molotov was handed to the Polish Ambassador in London.

In the meantime, many thousands of the arriving exiles had had to be turned back owing to lack of supplies and they made their way southwards to a warmer climate, where it was hoped they might find the means of existing in agricultural work of some kind The majority, however, died of malaria, any survivors were eventually absorbed in the Polish Army when it arrived in Turkestan

On November 15th, General Anders and the Polish Ambassador had had an interview with Stalin in the presence of Molotov, and Stalin himself personally changed the previous order, approving the suggestion that the Polish Army, now estimated to be 60,000 strong, should be increased to the maximum capacity, and furthermore, that the training of all available Poles should be speeded up. The climax of the bargaining

over this question of the numerical strength of the Polish troops came during the first days of December when Sikorski arrived in Russia via Africa and Teheran, accompanied by his Chief-of-Staff, General Klimecki, and the British Liaison Officer, Major V. Cazalet. On his arrival, there was an ' open ' talk between Stalin and Sikorski, who was anxious to unite all the Polish forces in Persia, and to include the Carpathian Brigade which had fought in Africa and had been besieged in Tobruk It became evident to Sikorski that conditions did not exist in Russia for the formation of such an army, and he proposed to Stalin that seven divisions should be formed and transferred to Persia, where they could be equipped by the British and return to the Russian front in due course In addition, he wanted to transfer some 25,000 men to Britain with a view to augmenting the forces stationed there.

Stalin reacted angrily to both these proposals. " I am an old man, sixty-two years of age. I know that where an army is formed, there that army should remain. If Poles don't wish to fight let them say so. If they want to go—let them go. We can't keep them " Sikorski, offended by the insinuation that the Poles did not want to fight, denied this allegation and retorted to Stalin : " Improve the existing conditions which surround the Poles and they would be able to fight " But Stalin remarked brusquely : " The British need the Polish troops—we can do without you We shall re-conquer Poland ourselves and give it back to you."

Sikorski pointed out to Stalin that under the existing circumstances, the lack of proper food and medicine, with typhus raging, and no equipment, it was impossible to form even one Army Corps. Stalin acknowledged that the conditions for his troops were more favourable, but they were " supplying what they could to the Poles." He had received Churchill's request regarding the transfer of the Poles to the British Zone, and he agreed to allow three divisions to go In the meantime, he said, " orders would be given to find quarters for the remaining divisions."

The Polish Premier and Commander-in-Chief, made it clear that he was responsible for urging the British authorities to have the Poles transferred to Persia, in order that he might obtain equipment for them, but he was prepared to fight on the Russian front when this had been done. Stalin seemed to be convinced by Sikorski's sincerity, and feeling he was perhaps competing with the British for the Polish Army, appeared to regret his former charge.

Therefore, in December, both Stalin and Sikorski agreed that the conditions for the formation of a Polish Army in Russia, on the latter's supplies alone, were impracticable. The Soviets, however, would ' give what they could,' but the Poles must trek southwards to Turkestan, nearer to the British supply bases through Persia. The Army was to consist of six divisions, each containing 11,000 men, with 30,000 reserve, i.e., 96,000 in all. Furthermore, they agreed that 25,000 men should be sent to the Middle East as reinforcements for the Polish forces then

fighting in Libya, and that two thousand airmen and sailors should join units in Great Britain Thus the total of the Poles recruited in the Soviet Union would amount to 123,000 men.

It had been agreed during the conversations between Sikorski and Stalin that the hundreds of thousands of Polish civilians dispersed throughout Russia should be concentrated in one area in the South, where they could be under the care of the official Polish delegates.

On December 4th, Sikorski signed in Moscow, a 'Declaration of Friendship' with Stalin. It was "to express the spirit of co-operation" and the necessity for Poland and Soviet Russia to collaborate, not only during the war, but also in the building of the post-war world.

The text of this Declaration was as follows .

"The Government of the U.S.S.R and the Government of the Polish Republic, moved in a spirit of friendly agreement and military co-operation, declare ·

"1. German Hitlerite Imperialism is the most evil enemy of mankind. It is impossible to make any compromise with it. Both Governments, together with Great Britain and other Allies, and with the support of the U.S.A , will continue the war until complete victory and the final destruction of the German invaders.

"2. In putting into operation the agreement signed in July, 1941, both Governments will lend each other full military aid during the war. The forces of the Polish Government in the U S.S R will conduct the fight against the German bandits shoulder to shoulder with the Soviet forces.

"In peace-time the relations between the two states will be based on the principles of good neighbourly collaboration, friendship, and the honest mutual observance of obligations agreed by both sides

"3. After the victorious termination of the war and the adequate punishment of the German criminals, it will be the task of the Allied States to guarantee a just and lasting peace

"This can only be achieved by a new organisation of international relations based on the unity and enduring alliance of the democratic countries.

"In the creation of such an organisation, a vital condition will be respect for international law, supported by the collective armed forces of all Allied countries Only under such conditions can the Europe destroyed by German barbarians be resurrected and a guarantee given that the catastrophe now occuring in Europe will not be repeated"

In his broadcast on December 4th, regarding the 'Declaration of Friendship' Sikorski suggested that:

"The Soviet Union understood that a strong Poland is an indispensable factor in a stable European equilibrium. This brotherhood in arms, which appears for the first time in history, will be of decisive significance for the future of both States and peoples as a basis of relations which, unlike those of past, are friendly. Both sides are ready to forget all that divided them in the past. We believe that the Soviet people will not forget that we stood by their side during their most difficult hour and that they will realise what a strong and friendly Poland, facing Germany, means to them Mutual goodwill and mutual respect for national peculiarities and state sovereignty—these are the only conditions which make such relations between us possible."

In his speech at the banquet, given to celebrate the occasion, Stalin expressed the hope that Poland, after the war, would be " greater and stronger " than she had ever been.

Seven Moscow radio stations repeated Sikorski's speech and played the Polish National anthem, before and after it. At Stalin's personal order the text of the Polish-Russian ' Declaration of Friendship ' was repeated in forty languages. Even in German, in order, as Molotov stated to Sikorski, " that Hitler should also have the pleasure of hearing it." And yet that same evening the Soviet's Polish-speaking ' Kosciuszko ' station and the Ukraine-speaking ' Shevtchenko ' (named after a well-known Ukraine poet) broadcast entirely different programmes—the latter on the effect of the future Red Ukrainian rule in Polish Lwów. That self-same night in Kuibyshev the N.K.V.D. arrested the leaders of the Socialist Jewish Party of Poland's ' Bund,' Erlich and Alter

On December 1st, 1941, just as Sikorski had arrived in the Soviet Union, the Moscow Government sent a Note to the Polish Ambassador reaffirming its ' decree ' of November 29th, 1939, whereby " all persons domiciled in the Eastern half of Poland had become Russian citizens." Those specifically of Polish nationality only, were exempt In other words, those Polish citizens who had been residing in Polish territories in November, 1939, and who belonged to the ' minorities,' Ukrainians, White Ruthenians, Jews or Tartars, were simply proclaimed by Moscow to be subjects of the U.S.S R. Was this action intended as a test case ?

Sikorski's visit to Russia had merely smoothed over the edges of the Kremlin's irritation and impatience regarding the rebuilding of the Polish Army and towards the Polish problem in general, and it did not prevent them beginning a propaganda campaign in an attempt to contact the Polish people themselves independently of their Government. The Polish Army, to the formation of which the Kremlin had given so little, was reported in the Soviet propaganda to be an army of " one hundred and fifty thousand " and " the greatest Allied Army abroad " At that time the Polish Forces in Great Britain and the Middle East numbered forty-eight thousand.*

Pravda, on December 6th, in its leading article entitled " Soviet-Polish Declaration of friendship and mutual assistance " underlined, " this Declaration will be recorded in history as the struggle for the freedom of man against German Fascist Imperialism . . . it will be an example of an unbreakable decision, the freedom-loving people united in the fight against the bloody Hitler ! "

In London, the official Polish Press welcomed this Declaration with the same enthusiasm. Sikorski was convinced that " the frank talks and the signing of the Declaration of December 4th, a Declaration which was clear, expressive and far-reaching, had dispersed the apparent anxiety

* Sikorski's statement in Egyptian Press, November 13th.

regarding the difficulties over the execution of the Agreement of July 30th, 1941."*

Sikorski had gone to Russia with the idea of endeavouring to settle the Polish affairs directly with the Soviet Government. He had gone with the full agreement of the British Government, anxious to improve and strengthen Polish-Russian collaboration to the maximum degree. Although it appeared that matters had been settled in a favourable way, in a few weeks time, at the end of December, news came from Russia which had an ominous ring in the ears of the Poles. The Soviets were not executing their part part of the July Agreement—all the Poles were not being released and Sikorski's visit seemed to have made no marked difference to their situation. The fate of thousands was still unknown, while many, it was revealed, were still being held in the Russian prisons. The organising of the Polish Army was encountering incredible and unforeseen difficulties. Already by the end of November the Kremlin had come to the conclusion that the climax of its crisis on the front-line had been reached, and that the Soviet regime, in spite of heavy defeats, was still strongly established. No doubt during this period the conviction began to spread in the Kremlin that sooner or later they would be able to pass over to the offensive against Germany. A Polish Army might have proved useful in the defence of the Soviet Union, but when Russia's advance Westward, which was eventually intended to reach Poland began, this would no longer be the case

It is difficult to understand why Stalin made an Agreement with Sikorski for the recruitment of 123,000 men and why he again emphasised his willingness to permit the formation of an Army on Russian soil, if at the same time and due to the Kremlin's insistence on the exclusion of those who, though Polish citizens, were not of Polish blood, the number of men available for recruitment had been considerably reduced Furthermore, a few weeks later, when the Recruiting Commissions were set up, the Soviet Government openly violated Article 6 of the Polish-Soviet Military Agreement, by composing these recruiting boards in the districts containing deportees, from Soviet officials, whereas, under the provision of that Article, they were to function with the "assistance of the Soviet authorities " only. Thus the decision rested entirely with the Russians as to which men were to be allowed to enlist in the Polish Forces It was soon evident that they were not particularly anxious to increase the size of the Polish Army for every able-bodied person not of Polish blood, who came under the Decree mentioned in the Soviet Note of December 1st, was conscripted to the Red Army. From January, 1942, other evidence of the Russians' unwillingness in this direction began to be made manifest. The notices of conscription were not handed by the postal authorities to the recipients for whom they were intended. The railways refused to transport the Poles who did not have

* Stronski S., *Wiadomości Polskie*, London, 1941

pass-cards in their possession, while the District Commissars declared they had received no instructions to issue them with such cards. And so in the greater part of European Russia, (Archangel, the Vologda provinces, the Republic of Komi, part of Asiatic Russia, Altay, Krasnoyarsk and Yakuck provinces) where the majority of the Poles had been sent, they were cut off from any means of rejoining the Polish forces. It is important to stress here, that the Soviet Government had made no attempt to release those Polish citizens who had previously been compulsorily conscripted into the Red Army, as it had been decided upon in the Agreement. When, however, the Poles insisted on the fulfilment of that pledge and the Polish Ambassador pointed out to Molotov that Stalin had personally agreed to this in an interview with both Sikorski and Anders, Molotov denied it, stating there must have been some misunderstanding. Thereupon, from the November of 1941, the Russians again began forcibly enlisting Polish citizens into the labour battalions and a few months later, into the Red Army as well.

The Soviet's limitations in connection with the recruitment, combined with the extraordinary non-appearance of the thousands of officers, greatly obstructed the formation of the Polish Army. Several hundred officers had been sent from Great Britain, but it was still insufficient to fill every post in the new Army. In addition, some of them were not able to reach their headquarters until four months later—four months to reach Tashkent from Archangel! And equipment and armaments had still not arrived.

Both Russians and Poles finally had to confess themselves disappointed in the results The Poles had not made their expected appearance at the front—due to lack of armaments and officers, while the Russians had also been unsuccessful in their efforts to master the Underground Army in Poland. The Poles were to suffer a severe blow when it was realised that the Kremlin, who, after the signing of the Treaty of July 30th, 1941, and after having agreed to allow the creation of a Polish Army, was now opposing this plan.

The Kremlin had begun to realise that this army inside Russia itself would, from the political point of view, be a burden. As a One-Party State in principle and practice, the Soviet Union does not permit any independent organisation to exist on its territories.* The appearance in

* After achieving power, the Bolsheviks had retained a few national troops in the Autonomic Republics, but eventually ceased even this pretence. The last to perish in the campaign for the consolidation of the 'State Party' were the Ukrainian troops. They were dissolved in 1935-7. In those years after the execution of Yakir, the Commander of the Kiev military district and one of the heroes of the Civil War, together with his entire staff, several thousand senior officers in the Ukraine were arrested, shot or exiled to labour camps When the Red Army had changed its structure and 'territorial divisions' disappeared, nothing remained of the Ukrainian troops Only the names of local towns, as in the other Republics, had been retained for certain regiments.

1941, of this foreign Army on Russian soil seemed to the Kremlin to have certain aspects which were revolutionary in character. And anything 'revolutionary,' that is, any thoughts or any features not in agreement with the Party doctrine and schemes, was cut off at birth by the reactionary bureaucratic state machine An independent Polish force on the soil of Russia was indeed revolutionary. It made apparent to the nationalities of the U S.S R., that at least one nation, which had formerly been under the Tsarist regime was now free and that even the Soviets were obliged to take its freedom into consideration. And furthermore, it might even begin to dawn on the minds of these enslaved peoples that their state was not so omnipotent as the propaganda of the Kremlin would have them believe. For twenty years, the Kremlin's ruling autocracy had been unaccustomed on their territory, to 'ask' instead of 'order,' and the existence of an Army whose orders came from a Government not in the Soviet Union was too much for Moscow, whose word had been supreme for so long. One of the first measures to be taken by the Russian authorities, was to ensure that the Polish troops were isolated as much as possible from the local inhabitants. They were seldom given billets, but were quartered in abandoned camps, or, in many cases, as for instance, in Turkestan (where the Poles were afterwards sent,) the villages were handed over, emptied of their population, the erstwhile inhabitants having been sent elsewhere.

The Soviets were unwilling to give arms to the Poles. They appeared equally dissatisfied with the idea that the British and Americans might supply them with armaments and that a numerically strong Polish Army would indeed go to the front It was not difficult to understand their uneasiness in this respect, for in the event of a victory, this Army and the Soviets would enter Polish territory together. A contingency which would place the Kremlin in an embarrassing, not to say difficult, position with regard to Poland The Polish Government, then having a real force in their own country, could undoubtedly prevent the Kremlin obtaining complete control of Poland, and carrying out a policy of further extermination, similar to the one which they had undertaken in 1939-41 The Poles considered along these same lines and were just as equally anxious to have this army prepared for what might prove to be the shortest road back to their country.

The Soviet deliberations on this problem were far from satisfactory, and, as the implications of the situation increased, the Kremlin took more and more decisive steps to limit the strength of the increasing Polish forces. Their hands were tied regarding the possibility of dissolving this Army altogether, for they still had need of it at that stage of the war, moreover, such a move was liable not only to terminate in a pitched battle, but also to have serious repercussions in the camp of the Allies.

The Army now began to leave the camps on the Volga The first units were sent at the end of January and the transportation continued until the

20th of February, by which time the entire Army had been taken to Turkestan in the territories of Central Asia. Headquarters were established in Jangi-Jul, thirty miles from Tashkent and the troops were dispersed eastward and southwards from this town to Afghan and the Chinese frontier.*

Here, in a warmer climate, and with their needs supplied by the British through Persia, life began to be a little easier. But so impoverished was their condition that epidemics of typhus and malaria broke out From 14,000 men in one camp, 6,800 suffered from malaria In the Kermine camp 3,000 died, in the Guzar 4,000 Death took a high roll call from those exhausted people From time to time the Soviet Government continued to propose that a Polish Division should be sent to the Russian front. General Anders, on behalf of the Polish Government, always returned the same answer—" without armaments he could do nothing " If these were issued, then his Army would be ready by June, 1942, to fight on the Russian Front. Since the Kremlin could not make up its mind to ' give arms to the former foe,' the only solution was to send this Polish Army (which was proving such a curse to the N K.V.D.) away from Russia. On March 18, Stalin informed General Anders in the Kremlin, that from April 1st, he would be obliged to cut the food supplies for his Army and that only sufficient rations for 44,000 men could be issued, thus necessitating the reduction of the Polish Army contingent to that number. "Russia was short of food and units not engaged in actual fighting had to be reduced in number. Even certain Russian divisions had been dissolved, and the men sent back home " When Anders insisted that food should be given for all his people—73,000 at that time, Stalin refused He declared that the Soviet Government was not at fault, stating that the U S " had given a guarantee to the effect that one million tons of corn would be sent to Russia and they had only sent one-tenth of this amount."† Any Poles

* 5th Infantry Division (General Boruta Spiechowicz) went to Dshalal Abad, near the Chinese frontier, 6th Infantry Division (General Tokarzewski) to Shachrizal, near the Afghan frontier, 7th Infantry Division (General Szyszko-Bohusz)—Kermine on the railway Tashkent-Aschabad, 8th Infantry Division (General Rakowski)—Tshok-Pak, on Arys-Frunze railway, 9th Infantry Division (Colonel Boleslawicz) to Margelan, between Fergana and Dzalal Abad, 10th Infantry Division (Colonel Schmidt) to Lugovoje, between Tashkient and Alma Ata In addition, some units went as far as Guzar, near the Afghan frontier.

† *The Times*, on February 28th, 1944, in its cable from America, had reported :
"Mr. Leo T. Crowley, Foreign Economic Administrator, made the following statement in Washington yesterday .—

" Shipments of munitions and other war supplies under lend-lease from the United States to the Soviet Union in 1943 were almost double 1942 shipments A total of 8,400,000 tons (United States ton of 2,000 lb.) of supplies with a value of $4,243,804,000 was exported to the Soviet Union from the beginning of the Soviet aid programme in October, 1941, to January 1st, 1944.

" Shipments in 1943 totalled 5,400,000 tons, compared with 2,800,000 tons in 1942. In 1942, 12 out of every hundred ships taking supplies from the United States to the Soviet Union were sunk by enemy submarines, surface raiders, or bombers."

Statistics show how much of those 2,800,000 tons of shipments in 1942 consisted of corn.

above this number (44,000) must be evacuated immediately to Iran. An order which was a definite infringement of the Sikorski-Stalin Agreement which had provided for an Army of 96,000 men on Soviet soil.

The evacuation was carried out during the last days of March and the beginning of April, 1942, from the port Krasnowodsk on the Caspian Sea to Port Pahlevi (formerly known as Enzeli) in Persia A total of 31,030 soldiers and 1,159 P.S K (A T S. girls), 1,880 boys, 3,070 children and 7,689 adults, chiefly women, left Russia. The evacuation was directed on the British behalf by Colonel Alex Ross The evacuees were taken to the outskirts of Teheran, and later the soldiers were sent to Iraq, while most of the civilians went on to various parts of Africa and India.

By the spring of 1942, the problem of the Polish Army in Russia had been entirely solved The Kremlin had put a stop to the recruitment and to the release of the Polish prisoners and exiles and it now began to get rid of the Army itself In view of these unfavourable developments, General Sikorski sent a message on April 9th, 1942, to Stalin, in which he emphasised the importance of increasing the strength of the Polish fighting forces and appealed for the continuation of the recruitment and the evacuation of the Polish citizens to the Middle East. As Great Britain had agreed to take an unlimited number of Poles from the Soviet Union, the Polish Government was anxious to extract from Russia and to save the lives of as many of their people as possible

The Kremlin remained indifferent to the pleas of Sikorski. The Polish Government reverted to these matters on several occasions (the Notes on May 1st and June 10th, to Bogomolov, the Russian Ambassador to the Polish Government in London, and the Note of the Polish Ambassador in Russia to Molotov on May 4th), but in every instance there was a negative reply from the Soviet Government

On May 13th Sikorski received an answer from Stalin to the effect that he had already informed Anders why he was unable to hold the Polish Army in Russia ; that the reduction of its contingents was a result of the fact that the Polish forces " were not in the front line " " Since the conditions had not altered, no changes could be made in the circumstances of the Polish contingents as established on March 18th, 1942 " But those conditions could only have altered if the Soviet authorities had supplied the Polish Army with armaments. It rested entirely in the hands of the Russians themselves The next day, on May 14th, Molotov, in his reply to the Polish Ambassador, went to even further lengths He stated .

" 1. In Premier Stalin's verbal agreement with General Anders of March 18, the number of Polish soldiers was reduced to 44,000 ; the entire surplus was in due course evacuated, and therefore the evacuation must be considered as final.

" 2 Further recruitment and voluntary enlistment for evacuation to the Middle East are impossible, for the very reason that the total number of the Polish Army was fixed at 44,000 men

" 3. The Soviet Government consider it purposeless to continue

recruitment and voluntary enlistment into the Polish Army, and also for Polish military institutions dealing with these matters—i.e., registration, victualling and medical posts—to resume their activities.

" 4. In reply to the charges of induction of Polish citizens into the Red Army and labour battalions (stroy battalion), this Note asserts that only Soviet citizens have been conscripted "

In August, 1942, the Soviet Government informed the British Government, and the Polish Ambassador, who was then in Kuibyshev, that it had decided to evacuate the remaining Polish troops from Russian territories and since the British Government had already expressed its willingness to take them, the Soviets suggested that the remaining Polish Army should be evacuated to Iran. It was an answer to the British proposal made to Molotov when the latter was in London in May. He had been informed of the difficulties attached to the transportation of the mass of equipment intended for the Polish Army to Russia, and a suggestion had been made that it would be easier to transport the men to the Middle East, where this war material was stocked. When the Soviets had decided to get rid of Anders' Army, Moscow recalled this proposal and the British Government was simply informed of Stalin's consent. On July 2nd, the Polish Government received this surprising news through the medium of the British Foreign Office. The decision came into force at the end of August—44,000 soldiers crossed the Soviet frontier to Persia and with them 27,000 members of their families and orphaned children.

" Long rows of soldiers stood to attention on the decks of the ship as it prepared to leave the Russian port," one of the soldiers wrote, describing the scene of departure. The bugler played the song of ' the Polish Army.' From every throat burst the strains of that mighty song ' We shall never leave our soil . . ' it rang out like a threat to the enemy It was a threat— ' soon we shall be organised again and, arms in hand, surge forward on the path which leads to Poland, to the aid of our people, to the release of our country from its slavery '

" A second after the end of this song, there was a silence. A profound silence, uninterrupted by any word of farewell . . . And so, we left Russia "*

The Polish Army finally left Russia, but the agents recruited by the N.K V D. and inserted into the Polish Units remained in the Soviet Union—they consisted of a few men under Lieutenant-Colonel Berling. Before leaving Russia, General Anders approached the Soviet authorities with the request that a centre for the continuation of recruitment to the Polish Army should be permitted to remain open on Soviet territory. Moscow rejected this proposal on the grounds that " since the Polish Government did not consider it possible to send the Polish divisions formed in the U.S.S.R. to the Soviet-German front, the Soviet Government cannot consent to the formation of any Polish units whatsoever in the Soviet Union or to the recruitment of men for that purpose "

On August 27th, 1942, the Polish Foreign Minister, in a Note handed to Ambassador Bogomolov, declared that, the Polish Government considered

* Boruta Spiechowicz, *Polska Walcząca* (Fighting Poland), London, July, 1942.

the assertion " that the Poles were evading participation in the common struggle as entirely unfounded and inconsistent with the actual facts of the case, and furthermore that he could not accept the motives given for the refusal to permit further recruiting of Polish citizens still in the U.S.S.R."

Had there been any evidence of goodwill on the part of the Soviet Government an army of 300,000 Poles could easily have been raised in Russia. But that Government did not consider the presence on its territory, of a foreign army who, man for man, stood independent in mind and spirit, ready and willing to fight for the independence of Poland, as desirable

" In obedience to our orders and to the best of our ability," wrote General Tokarzewski-Karaszewicz, Second-in-Command of the Polish Army in U.S S R.,* " we were fully prepared to forget September 17, 1939, to forget our wrongs, the despair of hundreds of thousands of Poles, the whole tragedy of our country for which the Soviets are partially responsible We were willing to stretch out our hand in the name of a better tomorrow for the world We did extend our hand, but we were never able to discover any sincere response to our overtures during our sejour in the U S S R

" I must state that we were ready, right up till the last moment (if all the promises the Russians made to us had been kept), and we sincerely desired to fight side by side with the Red Army against the Germans But we could not, and did not, wish to fight with the tatters of our Army, while our comrades were still lying in prisons, dungeons and labour camps, and while hundreds of thousands of our families were undergoing terrible poverty and hardships and Moscow at the same time was questioning the citizenship of our families "

THE MISSING PEOPLE

" What the Polish General (Sikorski) had to say to the Red Army Marshal (Stalin) was something like this—in spirit, if not in words —

" I am here to find out what has become of the Polish people, men, women and children, *more than one million of them*, whom your men arrested in 1939, then transported into Russia's hinterland, and whom you have since kept in prison camps, labour camps, and jails of every sort.

" I am here to see to it that these people, *more than a million of them*, are liberated.

" I am here to see to it that these people are allowed to volunteer for military service—so that a Polish Army, raised from the Soviet prison camps, shall shortly be able to go forth to fight the Germans."

(Eve Curie, " Journey Among Warriors," New York, 1943, p 264)

A few weeks after the Soviet's *decree* which announced the release of the Polish citizens from the Russian prisons and forced labour camps, the Polish authorities were obliged to conclude that not all their citizens were being released and also, that a great many of them had disappeared completely.

In many cases only the weaker among the Polish prisoners were sent back from the labour camps to join the Polish Army Since each

* *Dywizja Lwów* (The Lwów Infantry Division), Jerusalem, 1944.

camp had its allotted task to fulfil in a given time and every commander was held responsible with his person for getting that work finished, he would naturally be unwilling to release the stronger men. No questions would be asked by the higher authorities he knew, if a few hundred Poles did not return The Russian bureaucrats were either unable or did not wish to produce a list containing the names of the Polish citizens whom they had deported to the Soviet Union. In many parts of the Soviet Empire, the order to release the Poles was not executed. It is impossible to state whether this was due to the lack of organisation in the country or to secret orders issued with the object of placing obstacles in the path of those who sought to accomplish the release of these people, but something more than just the difficulty of tracing all these Poles certainly did exist where the Soviet authorities were concerned.

In his diary, Cazalet endeavoured to find some explanation for the non-arrival of so many of those deportees .

" The Russians," he wrote, " scattered them about (between a million and a half and two million men, women and children) in labour camps from the most northerly point in Russia to the extreme parts of Siberia . Some of them were in camps too far distant even to get the news of their release until winter had set in. The difficulty of communicating over these vast areas also prevented the orders being carried out in certain camps for some time. There are, for instance, still some 25,000 in the province of Archangel who cannot be released because of transport conditions. There are 5,000 on the island of Nova Zemlya who will not be able to get south until late this summer There are another 1,000 at least, several hundred miles beyond Yakutsk, which was the furthest point to which the Tsarist regime ever sent political prisoners. There are only two months in the year in this part of Siberia in which communications exist with the rest of the world

"A great many, of course, have died . . . Many more will die this year "

Eve Curie, in her diary (p. 368) speaks of this indifference or reluctance on the part of the Russians to release the deportees.

"A young Pole attached to the Embassy told me how he had just been wandering throughout the immense territories of the U.S.S R , from one town to another, looking for his lost compatriots. His work had only consisted in checking lists of names with Russian officials.

" Whenever I got to a town, I first did the routine work with the local civil servants. Sometimes I was told there were no Poles on record in that particular place. Then I would go out in the streets and simply walk and walk, for miles, for hours, in one street, then in another, then back again. On my coat I had a very visible badge, bearing the Polish white eagle. One man in rags, then another, and still another—or maybe woman or child—would come up to me and timidly address me in Polish. I would ask : 'Are there any other Poles here?" Almost always the answer was' Yes, there are twenty of us, or fifty, at such and such place ' One day I was thus warned by sheer chance that three hundred Poles were parked at a railway station nearby."

The following is an extract from the evidence of Professor N. of the Lwów Polytechnic, who had a world-wide reputation as a specialist of metallurgy. He was a prisoner in the Komi Republic, which lies far away on the northern outskirts of the Soviet Empire in the sub-arctic

regions. This sparsely populated amazing 'Republic' was, in fact, nothing less than one vast prison settlement It consisted of thousands of labour camps with their millions of prisoners The government of this 'Republic' was in the hands of the prison camps authorities.

Professor N. gave first-hand information of how much depended on the whim of the local authorities as to whether or not the Polish prisoners were released after the conclusion of the Polish-Russian Treaty

" On August 15," he wrote," all of us, with the exception of those seriously ill, were taken to the camp near a railway station about two miles away There we found other Poles who had been brought from neighbouring camps—numbering about 400 persons in all.

" We reached the spot in the early evening. We were all confident that the next day, or at the most in a few days, we would be loaded on to a train and sent somewhere south

" Instead, at 4 o'clock that morning, we were driven to work as before The order was accompanied by mocking gibes, sneers and curses, the only answer to our protests against the violation of our freedom, and we ended up by openly revolting at this treatment. A few hours later, one of the leaders of a group of camps named Makiejev, arrived. He intimated that he wished to speak with one of us only, and the people selected me The leader began with threats, announcing that we had no right to consider ourselves free He stated that cases of release would be individual and would concern only those who had been sentenced on insufficient grounds, open to a re-investigation by the authorities

" His remark infuriated me and I heatedly enquired if it were fitting that he, as a representative of the Soviet authorities, should state in the presence of witnesses that ' The Soviet Government is capable of sentencing people for insufficient reasons? ' I stated that, being more loyal towards the Allied Soviet Government than he was himself, we would take the liberty of not believing his statement It would be more advisable, I continued, if he became better acquainted with the contents of the Polish-Soviet agreement, which had explicitly stated that an' amnesty ' had been granted to Polish citizens who had been placed in the camps and prisons on the grounds of well motivated verdicts The embarrassed leader returned to his head-quarters The next day negotiations on our behalf were commenced. Their attitude was now quite amicable We were asked if we would continue our work under the former conditions until transport arrangements could be provided for us

" On September 1, half of us, about 200 men, were conducted beyond the precincts of the camps. I was lucky enough to be among this number Here we were advised that we were free, and the distribution of ' amnesty ' papers started

" Now, however, a fresh trouble arose, for we were told that we would not be allowed to leave the boundary of Komi This was a terrible blow, as it was unexpected. It was clearly written in our papers that we had the right to choose freely any locality in Soviet Russia to which we wanted to go All of us wanted to make our way South, but the Bolsheviks had inserted only a few localities supposed to have been chosen voluntarily by us. I advised my companions not to accept these papers, and we all agreed upon this action which put the Soviet leader in a quandary He threatened us furiously, but we stood our ground, maintaining that we only demanded what the Soviet Government had granted us

" The leader then telephoned the Head Office of the Komi Camps.

After a couple of hours, he summoned me and said that it had all been a misunderstanding, and asked me to pacify the men as they would be allowed to go to any place they wished in Russia We all chose Buzuluk where our Polish army was about to be formed. We were then given our affranchisement papers and signed a receipt for them. The next day, the same leader invited me to have a short private talk in the camp with him, but this talk never took place At the entrance to the camp, my papers were taken away from me, and I was put under bayonet escort and removed by truck to another very small, but entirely Russian, camp where the prisoners numbered about 100 men My friends saw me being carried away

" I was subsequently released by sheer good luck, but not, however until mid-January, 1942. For four months I had received the severest of treatments, being ordered to accomplish a 100 per cent quota of work. I was not sent before a Medical Board on arrival and was physically incapable of even completing 25 per cent For this reason I was put in a ' lock-up ' at night and given only 300 grams of bread (10 ounces). At every turn I was told that I would soon die under these conditions.

" Owing to a mistake on the part of the organisation of this camp, I was sent to a third one, and before the papers on which my ' case ' was recorded came through, I had been released. Later, I learnt that our ambassador, on hearing of my re-arrest, had telegraphed several times to Komi Due to his intervention, I was finally set free "

The Polish Embassy, from the first moment of its establishment and reopening in Russia, began to seek for the many eminent Polish citizens whom they knew had been deported to that country. Many of the released men passed on news of others still held by the Soviets The Embassy, on the behalf of these men informed the Narkomindel (Foreign Ministry) of their existence In some cases, after a few months, the men reappeared and later on an undated notification regarding their release was received from the N.K V.D. The Soviet authorities refused point blank to release many of the Polish citizens stating they were " suspected of espionage " or of " sympathy towards the Germans " or for having caused " a diversion in the rear of the Soviet Army during the Russio-German War "— a statement utterly unconvincing, since Sikorski, in his speech to his homeland, the day after the German invasion of Russia, had stretched out his hand in friendship to the Soviet people in the name of the Polish Government. The situation was obvious to the Poles and the whole world that Poland was not fighting Russia . . .

The Soviet authorities gave no information regarding the majority of the detained Polish citizens, even in the cases where details of their places of imprisonment had been furnished by the Polish Embassy. For instance, there were many priests who could not be found, although a list of their names had been handed to the Narkomindel. It was also an established fact that in 1942, 150 Polish priests were still being held on the Soloviecki Islands on the White Sea. From another list of 591 doctors only 30 had been traced

It soon became obvious that the Soviet authorities intended releasing only those they wanted to set free and that many sections of the Polish

citizens had received a sentence of death in the Soviet Union—particularly the clergy, the officers,* and all those connected with judicature. The Polish Government was especially concerned over the fate of the many thousands of officers, of whom there was no sign

It was calculated there ought to be over ten thousand of these men in the Soviet Union—taken as war prisoners during the campaign or arrested later in Eastern Poland during the purge (about 1,000), and about a further 1,000, who had fallen into Soviet hands after the occupation of the Baltic States by Russia in 1940. Of this total (over 10,000), only roughly one-sixth had been able to join Anders' Army. Many of these had managed to survive only because they had disguised themselves as civilians or privates during their enforced stay in Russia There was intense amazement among the Soviet authorities when these men revealed their identity in the soldiers' camps after the signing of the Polish-Russian Treaty The officers had been well-known as such to the privates and were among the highest of military ranks, including generals. Yet in spite of rewards offered by the N.K.V.D, there had been no case where these officers were betrayed by their men.

It was known that officers taken as prisoners-of-war in September and October, 1939, had been transferred to three large prisoner-of-war camps; at Staro Bielsk near Kharkoff—3,820 officers, nearly 400 of whom were medical officers, plus 100 civilians, at Kozielsk near Smolensk —4,500 officers plus 500 civilians, and at Ostaskov 370 officers plus 6,200 non-commissioned officers, frontier guards and civilians, chiefly members of the Civil Service.

At the beginning of 1940, the authorities in these camps informed the prisoners that they would soon be returning to their families and had lists made out for this purpose, noting exactly where the men wished to be sent on their release On April 5th, the Soviet authorities began to empty the camps. Up to the middle of May, groups of 60 to 300 men were removed every few days. From Kozielsk they were sent westward in the direction of Smolensk. Up till then, these prisoners had written letters to their families in Soviet and German occupied Poland, and the letters had been received. After April, 1940, all communications ceased.

* Moat Alice-Leone, *Blind Date with Mars*, p. 433

At first it was thought that about a million and a half Poles were imprisoned in the U S S R, but subsequently this figure was found to be nearer two million. By November (1941) only seven hundred thousand had been released . . . No trace could be found of over five thousand officers and fourteen generals, one of whom was Stanislas Haller (former Chief of General Staff)

. . . The condition of the people when they arrived from the prison-camps was heart-rending I was on hand when a trainload of two thousand came into Kuibyshev. There were sixteen corpses in the cars—men and women who had died of hunger on the way.

By a strange coincidence I encountered a man in his thirties whom I had known well in Vienna ten years before as a rather fat and gay young blade It was not until he told me his name that I recognised him. Although six feet tall, he weighed only one hundred and twenty pounds.

Four hundred and five men, chiefly airmen, were left behind in these three camps and, in June, they were all deported to one camp, Grazovets, in the Vologda province. The officers who were moved first promised to write to their fellow prisoners in the camp, but no letters were received

Two months had now elapsed since the order for the release of Polish citizens had been issued and from those three above-mentioned camps not one person had, up till then, been sent back to the Polish authorities From Grazovets a group of officers arrived at Buzuluk, where the Polish headquarters had been established and these were able to give some news regarding the Kozielsk, Staro Bielsk and Ostaskov camps. The anxiety of the Polish authorities deepened and the Polish Ambassador and Commander of the Army approached the Kremlin leaders on the matter They asked Stalin, Molotov, and Vyshynsky, what had become of these 8,300 officers and 7,000 N.C.Os. and civilians, who were imprisoned in the camps up to the time when they were disbanded. The Polish Ambassador insisted that he must be provided with a copy of the lists of prisoners, which he understood had been made out in detail and should have been kept up-to-date by the Soviet authorities. At the Kremlin on December 3rd, 1941, General Sikorski asked Stalin bluntly " Where are these people ? " He simultaneously produced a list of 3,843 names of missing Polish officers which, compiled with the assistance of their fellow-prisoners, was naturally incomplete. Stalin replied, as before, that all Poles, without exception, had been released, and both he and Molotov expressed surprise at their non-appearance.* When Sikorski, dissatisfied with the reply pressed this point, Stalin vouchsafed the opinion that they had no doubt escaped from the concentration camps—a supposition, which was most improbable. It was impossible to escape from a Russian prison or concentration camp. The guard in every instance had to answer with his own well-being for any deserter It is not difficult to imagine that, in order to preserve his own skin, such a guard would use all possible means to prevent any prisoner from escaping, particularly as he would in no way be held responsible should the prisoner be killed in the attempt. Instances of escape among Soviet prisoners are unknown. Therefore, Sikorski could well ask with amazement " But where could they have escaped to ? " Stalin's reply had been " To Manchuria ! "

This statement was made with such finality that it was useless to put any further questions. But anyone with a knowledge of Russia will realise at once the sheer impossibility of many thousands of men escaping where not even one could succeed, especially as these camps were in Western Russia, and to reach Manchuria, 6,000 miles away, they would have to

* Yet in spite of this statement, on January 29th, Moscow radio broadcast a resolution from a meeting held by the Polish prisoners-of-war in camp "number 79," that they were anxious to fight against " bloody Hitler," and giving a unanimous vote to join the ranks of the Polish Army in Russia " Therefore, in January, according to Moscow's own admission, there were still Poles in the prison camps

traverse the entire Soviet Union. Moreover no one can pass through Russia without official permits, which amongst other things entitles him to obtain food An escape meant therefore, that the man would die of hunger. The Polish authorities compiled an additional list of 800 missing officers, this was handed to Stalin on March 18th, 1942, by General Anders, but it also had no result. Apart from the officers brought from the Grazovets camp, not one man known to be held in those three camps appeared. Of the fourteen generals previously enumerated in " Krasnaya Zvezda " (Red Star) twelve were missing; out of 300 colonels and lieutenant-colonels, 294 had not returned; and of the remaining number of officers only 397 men had been traced. From a total of 15,400 officers, N.C.Os., Polish prisoners-of-war who had been in the custody of the Russians in those three fatal camps, roughly 15,000 men had disappeared.

The Polish authorities in Moscow and Kuibyshev repeated their appeals regarding these men. The Minister of Foreign Affairs made numerous enquiries on their behalf to Bogomoloff, and on January 6th, 1942, handed him a Note drawing his attention yet once again to those many thousands of Polish officers who could not be accounted for. The only answer received from the Soviet authorities was " all Polish citizens have already been released and no further details are available regarding those who have not arrived at their destination." On May 19th, the Polish Ambassador in the U S S R sent a memorandum to the People's Commissariat for Foreign Affairs in which he expressed his regret at the Soviets' refusal to provide lists of prisoners, his concern as to their fate, and stressed the value which those officers would have had in war against the Germans. On no occasion did the Polish Government or the Polish Embassy in Kuibyshev ever receive an answer as to the whereabouts of these officers and other prisoners deported from the three above mentioned camps.

There were wild speculations in Russia and London as to the fate of these men, some thought they had been deported a great distance, probably Nova Zemlya where they had died, and it was also rumoured, that thousands had been drowned in the Volga There was another supposition that they had been handed over to the Germans, but this did not seem feasible, since in that case some news at least would have come out through the medium of the Red Cross or letters would have arrived giving some indication as to where they had been taken, as had been the case with Polish officers in the concentration camps in Rumania when that country had been over-run by the Germans

One high official of the N K V D , in his cups had said in confidence to a Pole : " Don't ask about those people—it has been a tragic mistake and no one can help them—now ! "* Many Russian officials discussed the problem with the Poles generally, and vouchsafed the opinion that they

* *Polska Walczqca,* London, 1943.

might have perished " during some long drawn out transportation on the railway," or, knowing the conditions, " during evacuation by river and sea routes." In January, 1942, Eve Curie cautiously wrote, while in Kuibyshev —

" It seemed impossible to find any trace of these men in the whole of Russia, and the Soviet bureaucrats were perhaps sincere when they said with apparent helplessness, ' We simply don't know where they are.' They had lost those men. In the general confusion of war they had lost five thousand men, as one loses a needle in a haystack "

Eve Curie tried to find some logical explanation of this mystery, but she had made an error of time in her reasoning. Those people had been lost, not " in the confusion of war," but before the war had begun for Russia itself. The Polish Government had asked for the release of those men during the first days of August, 1941, and at that time the camps where they had been in 1940, were still far from the front line.

In addition to these officers there were many other Poles who could not be accounted for—among them a great number of politicians, particularly Socialists belonging to the Polish Socialist Party (P.P.S.) and the Jewish ' Bund ' Some of these had died in the prisons, and as it was soon to be discovered, many had been executed *

After Stalin's purge, the death sentence in the Soviet Union was officially changed to that of ' transportation for life to the labour camps.' Any execution, therefore, was carried out in secret and reserved only for the most eminent among the enemies of Communism. This was an integral part of their system and not a political error committed during a

* President of the Labour and Socialist International Camille Huysmans, in his speech at the meeting to commemorate the death of Alter and Erlich on March 28th, 1942, in London, gave a long list of members of the Polish Socialist Party, the Ukrainian Socialist Party, and the ' Bund,' all Polish citizens, who had died while in Soviet prisons.

" To this list," he said, " I must add the names of the leading members of the ' Bund ' Anna Rozental, aged over sixty, member of the Central Committee of the Bund. She had previously spent ten years in Tsarist prisons in Siberia, and was arrested in Wilno at the end of 1939 by the Soviet authorities, together with all the other members of the local Bund Committee. In Summer, 1941, she was shot without trial, during the evacuation of political prisoners ; David Batist, Trade Unionist and member of the General Council of the Bund, was arrested in Eastern Poland in October, 1939, and was kept in labour camps for over two years—he died of exhaustion.

" Finally, over two hundred members of the local Bund Committee and Jewish Trade Unions of the towns of Eastern Poland were arrested by the Soviet authorities immediately after the Red Army occupied these towns. The fate of these comrades is unknown. The majority of them are probably no longer alive.

" These are the facts and, I ask you, have we the right to voice our indignation and protest here. I know we are placed in a difficult position. If we protest we shall be accused in certain quarters of trying to disrupt the Allied front, that we do not consider the great part played by the Russian Army in our common fight for liberation. If we do not protest, we must regard ourselves as cowards and as traitors to our friends' sacred memory

" . . . We shall not hesitate one moment. We are no cowards . . ."

time of special upheaval and passion Since, in the opinion of the Soviet Communists, the Socialists were the traitors of the working class and their most dangerous enemies, they, in particular had to be exterminated.

The case of Erlich and Alter received an enormous publicity in the U.S , and might be considered as a typical instance of the manner in which the Soviet Communists dealt with the Socialists of the rest of the world, where they were unfortunate enough to fall into their hands.

Henry Erlich and Victor Alter were well known members of the Jewish Socialist Party ' Bund ' in Poland, and of the Executive Committee of the Labour and Socialist International. Alter was also a member of the International Federation of Trade Unions They were first arrested by the Russians in Eastern Poland in September, 1939, but not on any definite charge, and were detained along with the other Polish citizens * After several weeks in the local prison, Erlich was transferred to the famous prison in Moscow known as ' Butirki.' There he was frequently questioned by various examining magistrates and once by the Commissar of N.K.V.D.—Beria. He was interrogated as to the attitude of the ' Bund ' towards all manner of social and political problems. Accusations of a criminal political character, so typical in any of the U S.S.R. political trials, were not lacking. For instance, he was asked to confess that, as leader of the ' Bund ' he had, assisted by the Polish political police, organised sabotage and terrorist acts on U.S.S.R. territory

When the Germans attacked Russia, Erlich was transferred from Moscow to the Saratov prison In July of the same year, he was brought into a room, not very large in size, where there were five or six military men. He was told this was the tribunal which was to try him. The members of the tribunal at the one and the same time acted as judge and prosecutor. There was no counsel. Erlich delivered a long speech in which he defended himself against the charges preferred by the prosecution—acts of terror against the U S.S.R.; support for the preparations of an armed rising against the U.S S R.; collaboration with the Fascists, etc. After a very brief deliberation by the tribunal the sentence of death was pronounced Erlich did not avail himself of the right to plead for mercy to the Praesidium of the Supreme Soviet of the U.S S R He was moved to the condemned cell, where he remained for two weeks, after which time he was asked to append his signature to the receipt of the ' Order ' by which his death sentence had been commuted to 10 years' hard labour in a punitive labour camp. In September, 1941, Erlich, as a Polish citizen, was released from prison

Alter was arrested by the N K.V.D in Kowel during the last days of September, 1939. After a few weeks he was transferred to the same prison in Moscow in which Erlich lay—though neither knew of the presence of

* *The Case of Henryk Erlich and Victor Alter.* General Jewish Workers' Union Bund of Poland, London, 1942, gives further details.

the other Alter, having heard the charges relating to crimes of a mixed criminal and political character which he, or his Party, were alleged to have committed, would answer simply: "It is a lie!" In prison he resorted several times to hunger strikes, fasting in defence of his own dignity or that of his fellow prisoners who were with him in the same cell Altogether he was on hunger strike for some thirty days In an effort to bring him to submission he was transferred, in 1941, for several weeks, to the renowned Lafortowsky prison in Moscow But in spite of all they had to undergo, neither Alter nor Erlich signed any of the confessions demanded from them. In July, 1941, Alter was tried and sentenced to death by a court martial He spent twelve days in the condemned cell. He also made no plea for mercy, and was later similarly informed that the sentence had been commuted to one of 10 years' hard labour in the labour camps. In September, 1941, he was released

This took place in the same manner as the release of Erlich. High officials from the N K.V D, on behalf of the Soviet Government, expressed their regret for the "mistake which had been committed by those sections of the N K.V D. who had detained them in prison, tried them, etc." Immediately after their release, a colonel of the N K.V.D., Aron Volkovisky, called on them as the representative of the Soviet Government and expressed the wish that they would both forget the wrongs done to them They were offered residence in one of the best hotels in Moscow and a sum of money (about 3,000 roubles each) was paid to them as 'compensation.' Soon afterwards Volkovisky approached them on behalf of his Government with the suggestion that they should form an all world Jewish, anti-Hitlerite committee on the lines of the Slavonic Committee created in Moscow. After consultation with the Polish Ambassador in the U.S.S.R., Erlich and Alter consented to form such a group A number of conferences took place between them and the representatives of the Soviet authorities. One such conference was held at the invitation of Beria, the Commissar for the N.K.V.D. who was present at the time. The principle work of the organisation was agreed upon, and its provisional membership and praesidium was to be composed of a Chairman—Erlich and Vice Chairman—Michoels (a Jewish artist) in the U.S S R., the General Secretary was to be Alter. The N.K.V.D. brought people to Moscow who were to be employed by the committee. The Soviet delegates themselves had no objection to raise either against the political and social principles, or the mode of procedure of the committee, but they made it a point that the approval of the Soviet authorities must be sought. As a result of the conversation with Beria, Alter and Erlich sent a letter to Stalin containing the draft of the programme and the mode of procedure of the committee.

At that time Moscow was finding herself menaced by the Germans who were fast advancing. In the middle of October, the capital was evacuated by the Government. The Soviet authorities also transferred

Alter and Erlich telling them that the N K.V.D. in Kuibyshev had received instructions to take good care of them and that the decision would be communicated in due course. Colonel Volkovisky also asked Alter and Erlich to prepare a proclamation to the Jewish masses in Poland and America. It could be seen from these moves that the Soviet authorities were anxious first and foremost, to make use of the influential position which the ' Bund ' held among the working classes in the U.S A.

At 12.30 during the night of December 3rd, Erlich and Alter were summoned to the office of the N.K.V.D. The next day the companion who shared their room, a member of the Central Committee of the ' Bund,' Lucian Blit, worried by their absence and lack of information regarding their whereabouts, went to the Polish Embassy, where a formal affidavit was sworn regarding their disappearance The Polish Embassy started enquiries and were finally informed that Erlich and Alter were in prison. The reasons given for their detention varied from time to time but had one thing in common, none of them made sense. A few days after the arrest, on December 12th, 1941, the N K.V.D authorities agreed to accept small parcels of underwear for the prisoners, but would not accept any parcel of food. An official of the N K.V D. declared " They are better fed than you are."

Until the moment of their re-arrest, there was no disputing the fact that the Soviet atmosphere around Erlich and Alter had been charged with absolute confidence in the sincerity of their attitude and intentions. No one could have foreseen that the efforts of these two men were to come to such a tragic end. The event came as a complete surprise to the Poles.

The following is the text of a cable sent to the Soviet Foreign Commissar, Molotov, on January 27th, 1943, by a group of leading citizens of the United States—men such as William Green, President of the American Federation of Labour, Professor Albert Einstein, Rev. Henry Smith Leper, Executive Secretary of the Universal Christian Council, Leo Krzycki, President of the American Slav Congress and others like them, once more requesting the release of H Erlich and V Alter.

" It is now more than a year since Henryk Erlich and Victor Alter, two prominent leaders of Jewish masses, in Poland, were re-arrested in Kuibyshev Most prominent representatives of freedom-loving people throughout the world of British and American Labour Movements repeatedly requested their release in vain. To-day, when universal public opinion unites in condemnation of Nazi criminals who are murdering in cold blood entire Jewish population, in Poland, we renew in name of justice and humanity our request for release of these outstanding courageous fighters against Fascism and Nazism, Henryk Erlich and Victor Alter."

The reply came .—

" Embassy of the Soviet Union, Washington, D.C ," February 23, 1943.

" Dear Mr. Green,

" I am informed by Mr Molotov, People's Commisar of Foreign Affairs, of the receipt by him of a telegram signed by you, concerning two Soviet citizens, Alter and Erlich

" I am instructed by Mr. Molotov to inform you of the following facts :

" For active subversive work against the Soviet Union and assistance to Polish intelligence organs in armed activities, Erlich and Alter were sentenced to capital punishment in August, 1941

"At the request of the Polish Government, Erlich and Alter were released in September, 1941

" However, after they were set free, at the time of the most desperate battles of the Soviet troops against the advancing Hitler army, they resumed their hostile activities, including appeals to the Soviet troops to stop bloodshed and immediately to conclude peace with Germany

" For this they were re-arrested and, in December, 1942, sentenced once more to capital punishment by the Military Collegium of the Supreme Court. This sentence has been carried out in regard to both of them."

Yours sincerely,

Ambassador Maxim Litvinov.

Erlich and Alter had been born in Poland and were Polish citizens. The Soviet Government had released them at the request of the Polish Government, which was proof in itself that the Soviet authorities had not then questioned their rights to Polish citizenship. It must also be stressed that, until January 26th, 1942, the Soviet Government had expressed no doubts whatever as to the Polish citizenship of Erlich and Alter. It was only on that date that the Narkomindel had surprised the Polish Embassy by returning the Polish passport of Erlich with a covering note to say that he was a Soviet citizen. On March 16th, 1942, the Narkomindel again sent a Note to the Embassy in which they claimed that Erlich and Alter were both Soviet citizens. All protests made by the Polish Embassy were in vain.

Until they were re-arrested on the 4th of December, 1941, they had been lodged first in Moscow by the Soviet authorities, and afterwards in Kuibyshev in the Intourist Hotel for foreigners. It was a well-known fact that any persons lodged in those Intourist hotels were closely watched by agents of the Soviet Secret Police.

It is evident that they had never been really free from surveillance while on the territory of Soviet Russia and consequently they could not have carried on any subversive action against the Soviet Government, even if it could be assumed—a suggestion, which is merely absurd—that these men had suddenly changed their ideas and turned pro-Hitler, at that very moment when their country was under Hitler's rule. Neither, for the same reason, could they have had any opportunity as the Soviet authorities had alleged, of making appeals to the Soviet troops. " Erlich and Alter had devoted the whole of their energies and activities, during the short period between their release and re-arrest, to a task whose object had been very opposite to that with which they were charged."

That Erlich and Alter were downright Socialists was beyond question.

It must be emphasised that no proof whatsoever was put forward by the Soviet authorities to substantiate their accusations or to justify the execution of these men.*

On the other hand, there was ample evidence that the Soviet authorities never had any intention of releasing Erlich and Alter entirely, or of allowing them to leave Russia. In pursuance of the Soviet-Polish Pact, thousands of Polish citizens were at that period being released from Soviet prisons and camps. Each individual received from the Soviet authorities an official document confirming his release, but Erlich and Alter were not given such papers.

Erlich and Alter had been executed and the Soviet Government, under international pressure, finally acknowledged this fact. The Comintern regarded these men and their fellow Socialists as a dangerous element and as competitors in the fight to gain control of the 'international proletariat' They were 'traitors to the working class' The Polish Socialists had been killed by the N.K V.D. acting under the orders of the Comintern Thousands of Polish citizens had been sent to death by the N.K.V.D. under the orders of the Soviet Government simply because they were Poles, and stood in the path of the advance of Russian Imperialism.

"What do the Poles mean to us?" impatiently exclaimed Zhukov (N.K V D. Liaison Officer attached to the Polish troops), irritated by stubborn efforts of the Polish authorities to extract every one of their citizens from the Russian prisons, "we treat them in the same way as our own people are treated."

No amount of intervention on the part of the Allied Governments could prevail upon the Kremlin, and the rest of the Polish people who had survived their ordeals were not allowed to leave Russia. All the Polish Government appeals "in the name of the solidarity of the United Nations and of elementary humanity" had no effect. To the appeals of Churchill, Roosevelt and the rest of the people in the world who were prepared to fight every injustice, the Kremlin consistently replied with an autocratic: "No!" "Stalin, like Pharaoh, hardened his heart," commented the "Scotsman"

* The *New York Post* of March 4th, 1943, reported

Wendell Wilkie personally asked Joseph Stalin in Moscow to release from a Soviet prison Victor Alter and Henryk Erlich, who by that time had already been secretly executed by the Russians . . .

The fact that Erlich and Alter were already dead was only revealed in the reply to a telegraphic appeal made by the American Federation of Labour, the American Congress of Industrial Organisations, and a number of other great workers' organisations and prominent persons. It is now apparent that many of those appeals were made on behalf of men who were already dead. The Soviet Government decided to reveal the truth about their execution at the moment chosen by them as the most convenient—when the Soviet Armies were advancing victoriously.

THE FIGHT OF UNDERGROUND POLAND

The Polish race has found itself between two mill-stones of extermination, between Germany and Muscovy It must itself become a mill-stone or else be grist for the mills of Germany and Muscovy . . There is no choice . . . Words are futile. . . . What faith to cling to? . . How to remain alive? . Strengthen your valiant heart, is the reply.

(Zeromski, S. " *The Faithful River,*" 1913).

The ancient tradition of Poland, that country which, though invaded many times, arose afresh amid the ruins and expelled the intruder, as in 1655, or endeavoured to overthrow him, as in 1794, 1831 and 1863, the years when the Polish Republic was entirely flooded by foreign armies, this ancient tradition clearly indicated the course which the Poles should pursue in 1939. The State must be preserved, that was their first task. Although the President of the Republic and Government had been forced to cross the frontier in order to retain the physical possibility of carrying out their duties in the free countries of the Allies, to pursue the policy of Poland, and the day-to-day collaboration with the other Allied Governments, the organisation of the State inside the country itself had to remain in existence During the time of the Russo-German invasion, the local authorities were dispersed, either by imprisonment or by deportation, and new ones had to be established.

An Underground State was first organised in Poland in 1863, under the Russian occupation, when the Poles created their own national authorities with every organ attributing to a state. The population of that period paid the taxes squeezed from them by the occupants and at the same time voluntarily paid into their own treasury as well

During the Second Great War the Poles were the only nation in Europe who, from 1939, adopted a rigid attitude towards the occupying Powers. This meant that in no sphere of political or civil life had there been any collaboration, or even a semblance of collaboration, with the invaders. Both occupants ruled by fire and sword, but, while the Russians limited their activities to just that, the Germans made many attempts to achieve a degree of political understanding with the population, but every approach proved unsuccessful. Any creation of a puppet Government in Poland, similar to that which the Germans attempted in 1916, was impossible in the atmosphere of 1939 and after. This attitude of the Polish people under Russian and German occupation resulted in the creation of a permanent state of martial law, and every Polish citizen became an outlaw in his own country. On the other hand, the Polish Underground did not recognise the rule of either occupants and, under the law of Poland, held both responsible for their anti-Polish activities.

In the early days of October, 1939, immediately after the fall of Warsaw,

the Polish leaders decided that their chief objective must be the prevention of any break in the continuity of the Polish State sovereignty The military defeat of Poland was not recognised by the country as the end of the life of the State. This meant, in principle, that the Polish State continued to operate through all essential authorities, institutions and organisations of a democratic state within those frontiers which existed on September 1, 1939.

In the stabilisation of this system lay that fundamental difference between the Polish Underground and the other resistance movements in countries under German occupation. In every other country, normal administrative authorities, and normal educational institutions, still continued to exist unmolested by the invaders, as well as, in most cases, a more or less constitutional government, co-operating with the Germans, or else set up within the framework of the occupying administration. But there was nothing of this kind in Poland. On one hand the Polish Underground functioned, dependent one hundred per cent on its Government in exile, while on the other hand there was the German administration—one hundred per cent German, and the only relationship between the two was a state of war. Any Polish citizen who fraternised with or joined the German governing body, automatically imposed a ' verdict of guilty ' upon himself

There were no rival or separate individual resistance groups aspiring to seize power in Poland as in the other countries of Europe (for example, in Belgium where there were seven in all); there was just simply the state authorities, with the only difference that they were obliged to function in secret. Such a State in the Underground cannot even be rightfully called a ' resistance movement,' in fact, the term was unknown in Poland. Any action undertaken by these Underground authorities was in the name of the Polish Republic.

The Government in exile, which from the first had never lost its continuity of authority, was primarily the ruling centre for its country, but as the Underground State in Poland consolidated its position, and increased its influence and power, the Government in London, it seemed, gradually fell into the role of an ' Embassy of the Underground Polish State,' but with great plenipotentiary powers. In 1943, it had already began to consult the advice of these political representatives inside Poland on any important question and by 1944 was entirely dependant upon the instructions received from that country.

For years the Polish Government had been most anxious not to advertise the existing conditions relating to the Underground, but when Moscow commenced its campaign in 1943 and early 1944 against the ' Polish emigré Government ' as representing only the ' ruling classes,' the Polish Prime Minister presented the true facts of the situation in his speech to his home-land on January 6, 1944 :

" The world is fully aware that the Hitlerian Government authorities are ruling over Poland on the surface only . . . That underground there exists a fully organised State in every domain of political, military, social, and economic life. The highest of these State authorities acting in the name of our country are resident in London.

" The Polish State has never ceased to exist, but its organisation has been compelled to go underground, leaving on the surface only those factors, who, in order to carry out their duties, have to act in the open.

On September 1, 1942, a Decree was issued regarding the provisional organisation of these authorities on the territories of the Polish Republic. The Cabinet Minister, acting as a Representative (Delegat Krajowy) of the Government residing in London, has all the rights of the highest authorities in the domain of state administration. The Representative of our Government is authorised to issue temporary orders in cases when, according to the existing law, the Premier, the Cabinet Council and the Ministers would have issued them. This Representative of our Government carried out his duties, with the help of his network of underground administration, acting under instructions of the Government of the Polish Republic, and in full co-operation with the Political Representation of the country and the Commander of the Underground Army . . .

" In this manner the legal continuity of the authority of the Government is assured in the Underground. The representative of the Government in Poland fulfils the function of acting Prime Minister until such time as he is able to return, just as in London, his deputy acts in the temporary absence of the Prime Minister. This Minister, the representative of our Polish Government, will, at the suitable time, disclose his name and place of office in Poland . . . "

A few months elapsed before state authority could be re-built in the underground, and the structure of social life restored. The main network was organised during the early days of 1940, and soon completed in the summer of that year, for neither the collapse of France nor the great German successes were able to shake the Poles' faith in the final victory of the Allies.

Immediately after the defeat of Poland, when the Government had left the territory of the Republic, the problem had arisen as to whether the Headquarters of the Government should be established within the country and the frame-work of the Underground state, or whether a plenipotentiary, entrusted with a general delegation of authority, should be appointed to reside within the country. The unquestionable traditions of Poland's struggle for independence all spoke in favour of the first alternative. The tradition of the 1863 Insurrection appealed with especial force to the imagination of the Poles. In the end the second alternative was decided upon. Three factors contributed to the acceptance of this, all of them were outside the control of the Polish people at home and imposed by the general state of affairs.

To begin with, if state life had been organised with the Polish Government remaining on Polish soil, but acting from underground, it would have had difficulty in obtaining direct contact with the Allied Governments, nor could it have easily carried on the country's foreign policy, owing to the question of maintaining communications with the Polish diplomatic

representatives in Allied and neutral countries, and therefore that Government might have found itself isolated from the world Even if governmental authority had been entrusted to one of the Polish Ambassadors, or to some collective body abroad, it would have failed to carry the weight which the Polish cause required in the international sphere, and undoubtedly the Germans and Russians would then have found it an easy matter to throw doubts on the authenticity of the instructions, declarations and political bona-fides of this type of official representation belonging to a secret and anonymous National Government in Poland. Furthermore, if such a Government had been organised within the country, there would have been a danger of interruptions in the continuity of the state and constitutional authority. Who would have appointed a new Government in the event of the existing one being discovered and liquidated by the enemy? There would always have been the danger of uncertainty, chaos, and even political abuse.

By the application of the accepted principle that the State is in the Underground, while the Government of that State is functioning abroad, advantages which would be impossible under any other arrangement were gained by the Poles. The country was assured of the continuity of the State. No matter what happened, nor what ruthless methods the occupying Powers might use, the Underground could not be completely crushed. The imprisonment, torture and death of two Plenipotentiaries of the Polish Government, and imprisonment of two Commanders-in-Chief of the Home Army, which the enemy was able to accomplish up to 1944, did not indeed interrupt its functioning.

Generally speaking, one could divide the Polish Underground into two fundamental parts : the official Polish State Authorities, departments and institutions, and the movement which represented the ' underground public opinion.'

The first official section of the Polish Underground consisted of the Home Army and three organised branches. The first was headed by the Plenipotentiary of the Government (Delegat Krajowy) and Deputy Prime Minister in the Cabinet, whose first task was to organise the secret administration and to maintain it at a level of efficiency, never meanwhile permitting the population to forget that the genuine national authorities were constantly behind them. Furthermore, and what was even more important, the instant the invader's army and civil authorities had either voluntarily or forcibly left Poland, this Polish administration would immediately appear, to take over the State property from the hands of the occupants. The already appointed civil servants would immediately be installed in every office and within the hour the country would in principle be functioning normally. Thus the period from the return of the Government and the settlement of the first essential questions would be a period of internal law and order.

The second branch of the Underground was the ' Home Political Representation ' composed of representatives from four political parties, Socialists, Peasants, National Democrats and Christian Labour. Since in those early days, it would have proved more than difficult to estimate the strength and scope of any particular political underground organisation and give it a corresponding place in the ' Home Political Representation,' the numerically superior parties agreed between themselves to maintain the ' unity of power ' Later the ' Home Political Representation ' was enlarged to form a ' Council of National Unity ' with representatives from all the various political groups. In theory its powers were approximately those of a Parliament

The third branch of the Underground was the organisation known as the ' Directorate of Civil Resistance ' It came into existence only in 1941. Its powers were reminiscent of the powers and scope of the People's Tribunals evolved by society in times of turbulence. The ' Directorate ' kept watch over the national morale, sustained its spirit of resistance and struggle and was simultaneously responsible to the nation for the maintenance of that ' esprit de corps,' known in Poland as ' the rigid attitude to the invaders,' and which in Great Britain was conveyed in the phrase ' no Quislings !' During the period when the German armies were having their greatest successes on all fronts, the German terror was especially bloody and ruthless , at that time absolutely confident of victory, the Germans were at their most arrogant and ruthless in their treatment of the Poles. During this phase one need was to become evident, namely, that punishment should be meted out to those among the German executioners who excelled in brutality, a punishment meted out not as a form of reaction or as an act of despair, but as the legal and legitimate act of justice of an oppressed but not subdued nation. This was the beginning of the death sentences imposed on the Germans, judgments which were later to develop on a wide scale. The creation of the 'Directorate of Civil Resistance ' led to hundreds of especially brutal Gestapo, county heads, German gendarmes, soldiers, officers, and S S. men being sentenced to death and executed.

A further justification for this action arose from the necessity of taking every step to maintain the morale of the Polish people themselves, and especially of those Poles, or, more frequently, the Volksdeutsche, who, under the conditions of German terror, were not strong enough to resist the temptation to succumb and to be disloyal to their fellow Poles. The ' Directorate of Civil Resistance ' administered two kinds of sentences, that of ostracism and that of death. The high qualifications of the members of the tribunals ensured that the sentences were just and amply motivated Every accused had an official defender, even though he himself be not present in the court, who pleaded all the existing extenuating circumstances. The majority of the sentences passed on Germans or Volksdeutsche were published before being carried out. A few of them were

temporarily postponed to the post-war period because of the proposed steps to bring responsible war criminals to public trial.

The sentence of ostracism was of specific importance. It was brought into effect by the publication of the name of the accused in the official secret press as one who had been excommunicated from the Polish nation. It was, in a sense, the deprivation of civic rights without imprisonment It lead to an inevitable moral, social and political isolation of the man concerned, resembling the anathema of the Middle Ages. Legally, the passing of the sentence meant that, although the person condemned to the sentence of ostracism did not suffer any punishment, apart from being compromised so long as the German occupation continued, as soon as Polish courts were again able to function in freedom, he would be handed over to be dealt with under the normal criminal court procedure. Thus from the legal aspect, a sentence of ostracism was understood to mean that, on the ground of incontestable evidence against the accused person, the State Authorities and public opinion held him in a condition of permanent accusation.

The competence and powers of the 'Directorate of Civil Resistance' must be considered in the light of the tremendous moral discipline of the Polish community and of the great national solidarity during this war. Not one Pole occupying an important position, whether political, social, economic or moral, earned for himself the sentence of death. Every known case concerned those people who were dangerous from the functional, and not from the political aspect They were petty provocateurs, agents of the German police, and in the overwhelming majority, Volksdeutsche, who, both during the days of Polish independence and in war-time, had demonstrated the fact that they were Poles, concealing the German origin which had led them to be long active against Poland for the sake of Germany.

One may enquire how deeply these Underground Authorities penetrated into the mass of the people? And how far it was possible for the secret administration and organs of the Government Delegate to function? The Underground Authorities themselves asked the same question and various attempts were made to obtain an answer. The means employed were simple enough. For instance, in 1941, the Government Plenipotentiary was experiencing a severe shortage of financial resources and, as in the rising of 1863, a normal internal loan was issued. The principle adopted was that each sum contributed to the Government Plenipotentiary Department was to be met at some date in the future from the State Treasury, together with a normal rate of interest. Thus the loan had a dual purpose; one, to raise finances, and the second to discover how far the people were ready to make sacrifices for what, after all, were anonymous and personally unknown state authorities working underground. This loan was raised several times.

The other instance was of a different nature, but the same result was obtained. The Germans published a " reptile press," newspapers and periodicals printed in Polish. There was a definite tendency to refuse to buy any of these journals, but the Underground Authorities realised that it would be difficult to enforce a categorical ban on them, since many people had to have a newspaper if only because of the general shortage of paper for all kinds of purposes. Moreover, there was a great lack of news and shortage of the printed word. But, anxious to restrain citizens from buying these periodicals, and at the same time to check up on the discipline, the ' Directorate of Civil Resistance ' prohibited the purchase of any newspaper whatever on Fridays. The Germans were compelled to reduce their editions on that day.

How the liaison between the Polish Government in London and the Polish Underground Authorities in Poland operated can be deduced from the fact that the Underground Press and every underground publication, including even books, were obtainable in Britain within a few days or weeks of their issue. In 1944 it was disclosed that supplies of armaments and material had been transported by plane to Poland at the request of the Underground, while liaison officers and politicians made journeys to and from England, landing on pre-arranged airfields which were protected by the troops of the Home Army, in some cases as many as one or two divisions were employed in these actions. The Polish and the World Press frequently quoted extracts from broadcasts which were given by the official radio stations of the Plenipotentiary Government in Poland.*

THE UNDERGROUND PRESS

The most powerful instrument which kept Poland alive, which directed the moral forces of the country, and revived faith in her destiny as a nation during the most critical moments of the war, was her Press. After the disaster of 1939, and the partition of the country between the two invaders, who immediately suppressed all papers, the press began to function underground. No concern, no authority had any influence over it. Except for a few papers which were the official organs of the Underground Authorities, it was an entirely independent Press, expressing the opinion of its respective publishers, mainly local organisations and groups of a political, social, economic, religious, self-educational or literary character. Each of these groups revealed their existence mainly through these secret publications : journals, books, etc.

* *The Evening Post*, December 12th, 1943, gave the following information regarding the main station *Swit* (Dawn).

Swit is a high-powered transmitter which operates on a specific wavelength known to Allied operators outside Poland. It has been in operation for two years but it never broadcasts twice from the same place, since it must evade the Nazi radio-location system and the Gestapo This station requires a dozen or more persons as operating personnel, but it is highly mobile and thus has been able to evade detection, or at least it has been able to continue to broadcast.

At the end of 1943, over two hundred regular periodicals had been published in Poland, among them even aeronautical and children's journals. Certain of the periodicals had had pictures printed by a three-colour process, and there were new editions of Polish literary classics, running to hundreds of pages per volume, as well as new breviaries, school primers, etc.* Certain journals, such as *Rzeczpospolita* (The Polish Republic), the official organ of the Government, the *Wiadomości Polskie* (Polish News), the official organ of the Commander of the Home Army, or, finally, the most popular of them all the *Biuletyn Informacyjny* (Information Bulletin) were published in 40,000 copies per issue. And the aggregate printing of all the underground periodical press was calculated to be at least 500,000 copies. Taking it as definite that each copy was read by at least ten persons, the figure of five million readers is reached.

The very names of many of the periodicals expressed the indomitable will of the Polish people. "Poland Lives" (*Polska Zyje*), "The Struggle Goes On" (*Walka Trwa*), "The Road to Freedom" (*Droga Wolnosci*), "Poland in the Struggle" (*Polska w walce*), "The Rampart" (*Szaniec*), "The Struggle and Freedom" (*Walka i Wolnosc*), "The Watch" (*Warta*), "Reveille" (*Pobudka*), "We fight for Truth and Poland" (*Walczymy o Prawde i Polske*), "The Pioneer" (*Pionier*), "Tomorrow" (*Jutro*), "The Cause" (*Sprawa*), "To Arms" (*Do Broni*), "Serve Poland" (*Polsce Sluz*), "The Army and Independence" (*Wojsko i Niepodleglosc*), "Free Poland" (*Wolna Polska*).

In order to publish a newspaper it was necessary to have an organisation. Each member had to act individually and secretly. The material had to be collected separately, a difficult and highly dangerous proceeding Each individual connected with the organisation submitted to the strongest discipline, for to make a slip meant disclosure and death.

Accidents did frequently happen, however, and the German police caught people with newspapers in their possession, or, less frequently, they stumbled on a supply of 'stationery,' but it was seldom that a hidden wireless was discovered (possession of a set was forbidden) or the actual printing premises unearthed. But the publishers of the Underground press were not only printers, they were soldiers as well. There was never any question of surrender, the house became a fortress. Grenades were used, the machine-guns rattled Death marked the end of this battle. The invaders were not given the satisfaction of being able to imprison or hang the editors and, therefore, they took revenge on the neighbours. There was one well-

* In discussion of the secret press, attention must be drawn to the tremendous part played by poetry, the 'lion's milk' on which the Polish people have always been fed. Each edition of a periodical, even the most important, found a place for it. Certain poems and verses learned by heart at school, acquired particular value and significance. There was the case of the fifteen-year-old boy, a member of the Home Army, who, captured by the Gestapo in the act of distributing periodicals, was subjected to torture. When the Underground got a secret message to him asking how they could help him and what he needed, he answered in the words of the poet Asnyk:

"Though I perish, though I fall, yet life will not have been squandered, for the finest part of life is in such struggle and pursuit. It will be worth seeing that magic building of crystal from afar. It will be worth paying with blood and pain to enter that region of the ideal."

known case in Warsaw at the end of March, 1942. At number 46, Dluga Street, the Germans shot seventy persons, all the inhabitants of the house—among them the eighty-year-old wife of the former Polish Ambassador in Ankara, Mme Olszevska.

On July 4, 1942, the Gestapo surrounded one of the villas in Czerniakow, a suburb of Warsaw, where they suspected a printing plant The Germans shattered the windows with hand grenades and fired into the building with their machine-guns. As a result two people were killed and two others died of their wounds in hospital. The owner of the villa, Michael Kruk, his wife and two sons, aged 15 and 17, and all the inhabitants of the nearby houses were killed Altogether eighty-three people perished

When a small printing press was discovered at Grojec, near Warsaw, not only were all the people working there killed in the encounter which followed, but every inhabitant of the surrounding area, many people who had nothing to do with the Underground Press. About one hundred and forty persons in all lost their lives.

There was also the episode where a printing office discovered by the Gestapo was blown up and the editor-in-chief, as well as other members of the staff, were shot. The next number to be issued was run off on a duplicator, on paper of wretched quality, bearing the following words: "We sincerely apologise to our readers for the fact that, owing to circumstances outside editorial control, the present number does not appear in the form to which readers are accustomed . . ."

THE HOME ARMY

The first Underground Polish Army appeared in the field in 1863, and fought against the occupying Russians for one year. The Underground Army created in 1915-1918, during the German occupation of the whole of Poland, revealed itself only in November, 1918, completely surprising the Germans. This army of fifty thousand members, the scaffolding of which was the Polish Military Organisation—P O.W. (Polska Organizacja Wojskowa)—was led by General Smigly Rydz, and it became the basis for the building of a force numbering a million and a half men, a force which was to arrest the Communist invasion of Europe in 1920. The effect of the appearance of this Underground Army in that year of 1918 was enormous both in Poland and in Europe. It should be recalled that, although Germany had been defeated on the West at that time, she had attained a complete victory on the Eastern front. The German forces had penetrated deeper into Russia than during the Second Great War, occupying the Caucasus, and benefitting from the oil of Baku and Tiflis and, while still in possession of this front, had negotiated and signed the treaty of Brest-Litovsk with the Soviets. Frightened by the growing threat of Communism, the Allies had given the Germans a free hand in Russia. The Armistice signed by Foch on November 11, 1918, at Compiegne, allowed them to stay there until "further instructions." The Germans hoped to be able to take advantage of the fruits of that Eastern victory, but the appearance of this Polish Underground Army, which proceeded to occupy the railroads in their rear, destroyed this plan. General Falkenhayn had watched with dread his Eastern Front practically

cut off. By the early part of November, 1918, Southern and Central Poland had been freed and the invader's troops garrisoned in that country had surrendered. At the end of November, the greater part of Eastern Poland, and at the end of December, the Western Provinces were taken from the hands of the Germans. The Polish Forces appeared in Great Poland (Poznan had been freed on December 27), at a distance of a hundred miles from Berlin and, by this fact alone, the Germans' Eastern front tottered. The German High Command was left with one solution—to quit Russia. Its forces were faced with the alternative of fighting their way to the Reich or negotiating for a free passage through Poland. They chose the latter course and were allowed to pass, on condition they abandoned their armament and equipment.

Thus the action of the Polish Underground Army had compelled the Germans to leave Russia and the Ukraine, countries where there had been no forces capable of disarming them. The Germans left the Caucasus in December, Kharkov on January 3, 1919, and Kiev and Minsk a few days later, two months after having been expelled from Warsaw. Their unwillingness to quit the eastern front was evinced on their left flank. They continued to stand firm in the Balticum, and, with East Prussia in their hinterland, the Germans held on for over a year until the late autumn of 1919 They left Lithuania in the December of that same year.

The existence of the Underground Army in Poland in 1918 not only made it possible to disarm the occupant and remove him from his broad and far-extending front, but it permitted at the same time the immediate establishment of a national democratic regime in the country, (the election to Parliament was held on December 28) and the immediate protection of the frontiers, which were so soon to be attacked by Communist Russia. Thus, at that very moment, at the end of 1918, it was the Polish Army, not the German, which stood as a barrier between the West and the threatening Bolsheviks, and which forbade the entrance of the Red Revolution into Europe.

The formation of the Underground Army in Poland during the Second Great War surpassed anything which has hitherto been achieved in the realms of conspiracy in any country of the world, even in Poland. The long and determined struggle against the occupant, which culminated in the Warsaw rising in 1944, was ample proof in itself. The secret military groups first came into being immediately after the cessation of hostilities in Poland between the Polish and the invader's armies on October 7, 1939. These groups, based mainly on the existing military units, influenced here and there by political parties, began to operate on various sectors of the home front, and slowly, little by little, started to mobilise the people into an active struggle against the occupying authorities. A Supreme Command came into being on May 17, 1940, with the title of ' Command

of the Military Organisation of Underground Poland.' It took some little time to bring all the groups within a single framework and to achieve the centralisation under a single command.

At first the work as a whole had to be divided into two fundamentally different spheres of activity to deal with the German and the Soviet occupation. A special military commander was appointed for the Soviet-occupied area, where the fight was limited to attacking transports of military materials moving westward to Germany from the East.* Only in 1942 did the time come for a complete re-organisation In that year all the existing semi-independent groups which *de facto*, rather than formally, had been subjected to the Supreme Command, were brought within the framework of a single Home Army (Armia Krajowa). The basic aim of that Army was not a struggle to restore the Polish State for, in principle, that State existed, but to liberate its territory. This Military Organisation of the State covered the entire territory of Poland, i e, not only the 'General Government,' but also those territories which had been 'incorporated' into the Reich or formed the 'Reichskomissariats' in the East.

The Army itself was comprised of the active force which, permanently mobilised, was used for carrying out definite tasks, such as sabotage, reprisals, the execution of sentences, etc ; and the reserve force. At first it was composed from volunteers, but later the citizens received orders and were allocated the execution of certain missions. The Commander of the Home Army was subordinated directly to the Commander-in-Chief of the Polish Armed Forces in London.

From the early days of 1941, when Russia entered the Allied camp, the struggle waged by this Army was intended to take some of the strain from the Russian front and to force the Germans into maintaining a greater number of troops in Poland; this number, according to the estimates at the end of 1943, comprised of six S.S. Divisions, 50,000 policemen, Grenzschutz, Bahnschutz and an army formation of a strength of fifteen Infantry Divisions. The objectives of the unrelenting offensive, undertaken by the Home Army throughout the years of occupation was, until the spring of 1944, strictly limited to blows aimed at key-points in the German communications and supply lines. When the Russians began their march across Poland after this date, the Home Army commenced operations on a larger scale. It had members among those Poles who had been carried off by force to the Reich. They, too, were organised in readiness for action at the given moment. In addition to which, specially selected soldiers among them received instructions to execute reprisal actions inside

* The Polish Underground wireless station *Swit* recalled this fact in its transmission of June 4th, 1943, in the following words: "Poland has been shedding her blood not only since 1941, but since 1939, for in 1940 Poles derailed the Soviet trains carrying oil for the Germans, and the wireless stations, which to-day are calling for an immediate Polish rising then called the Poles bandits."

Germany itself. A communique issued by the 'Directorate of Civil Resistance' on June 28, 1943, ran.

"Within the scope of activities as reprisals for German bestialities in Poland, and in particular for the murder of 189 Poles in Poznan and the massacre of 94 prisoners in the Pawiak (a Warsaw prison) carried out on May 8 last, at 9 p.m., on the 10th May two bombs were exploded in the Silesian Station in Berlin and on May 12 at 9.30 p.m. one bomb exploded in the station in Breslau. Together the two actions accounted for fifteen Germans killed and twenty-six wounded.

The struggle going on beneath the surface in Poland was, until 1943, known to the world mainly through information given by the German and (until the German-Soviet war) by the Russian Press From time to time they would pull aside the veil of secrecy by announcing preventive measures, resorting to threats and proclaimed death sentences, revealing the true reason, in order to give the punishment added point It was not until 1943 that the Polish Government considered it useful to release some information regarding the work of the Home Army And by this time the German occupants in any case had, no doubt, been able to obtain a certain amount of information regarding the organisation and its principles

The Germans' Eastern front extended from Leningrad to the Crimea, and all supplies to this front (apart from the extreme right section) had to pass through Poland. A fact which explained the key position held by that country and the efforts which Germany made in order to secure the safe passage of her war transport.

The Polish Home Army hampered this transport mainly by sabotage. A report from the Underground Authorities, quoted by *Dziennik Polski*, March 4, 1944, read:

"During the first four months of 1943, 82 trains have been derailed. in the last four months 83, 558 engines were destroyed or damaged in those first months and 2,013 in the last; 2,241 trucks destroyed in the first period, 9,980 in the latter months. 197 railway communications were disrupted and 56 interruptions in the telecommunications have been effected in the first four months In the last four months of that year, six large bridges were blown up. The troops of the Home Army encountered the Wehrmacht, Bahnschutz and the gendarmerie on 81 occasions in the same period. In some of these encounters the Germans were forced to use artillery, tanks and planes.

"Because of the mass murders committed by the Germans against the Polish people in the Kielce province in July, 1943, detachments controlled by the 'Directorate of Civil Resistance' carried out acts of reprisal in this area. A section of railway some ten miles in length, situated in the neighbourhood where the Germans were particularly bestial in their conduct, was seized and held. In this section, two fast trains running from Warsaw to Cracow, and one goods train in the opposite direction, were held up Simultaneously, station and section equipment was destroyed in Łączna and Jedrów, near Suchedniow. A fight developed, in the course of which the enemy suffered casualties to the number of about one hundred killed and wounded

"On July 2, 1943, a strong force attacked a train near Zagnansk (Central

Poland), on July 13, a second attack was made on a train at the same spot—twenty Germans were killed, thirty wounded A goods train was derailed on the line from Oswięcim to Trzebinia near Cracow. This is the fifth case of a train derailed near Oswięcim."

As a result of this constant danger which threatened their communications, the Germans found the usual protection given to stations, bridges and key points inadequate. They were forced to create special units to escort every military train, to employ armoured trains to protect the railway and to fortify the stations. Here they benefitted from the example of the Soviets for the latter considered the population over a vast area to be unreliable, and every military train was preceded by an engine 'escort' The Germans applied a similar method in Poland and, as a result, traffic was slowed down and the effectiveness of the railway decreased. History will reveal the extent of the influence of this action on the issue of the battle of the Eastern front. One of the Polish underground periodicals declared, with how much truth it is difficult to determine, that the Battle of Stalingrad was won eighty per cent by the Russians and twenty per cent by the Polish Home Army, who held up the German supplies It is known that the German Panzer Army, when endeavouring to rescue the beleaguered Army of General Von Paulus in Stalingrad, was halted fifty miles from their goal through the insufficiency of their petrol supply.

The German authorities recognised the existence of the Polish Army as a military force, and this alone confirmed that the war on Polish soil had never ceased. They referred to one of the concentration camps in Majdanek in Central Poland as 'a prisoner-of-war camp,' and acknowledged every inmate to be a soldier of the Polish Underground Army, and a prisoner-of-war.

One of the important tasks of the Underground Authorities was to save the lives of the political prisoners. Raids on German prisons took place at Białystok, Łomza, Kielce, Końskie, Pińsk, and many hundreds of men were released. At Równe, in the course of a prison revolt, the Germans killed all the prisoners. On March 25, 1943, Polish forces attacked a motor lorry containing twenty-four political prisoners, who were being driven from the Gestapo headquarters to the Pawiak prison. This was in full daylight at 5-30 p.m. and in the centre of Warsaw. Five of the Gestapo escort were killed and three wounded in this clash. One prisoner lost his life, all the others escaped.*

An attack was made on the prison hospital in Lwów, where more people were released. In Mielec, Polish forces captured the prison, and rescued all those held under arrest. The journal *Rzeczpospolita Polska*, the organ of the Government's Plenipotentiary in Poland, gave the following communique from the 'Directorate of Civil Resistance' in its issue of June 21:

* "The Polish Underground Army," *Polish Fortnightly Review*, No. 84, London, January 15th, 1944.

" On the night of April 10, 1943, at Dabrowa, near Wysokie Mazowieckie, a detachment of the Home Army freed some comrades of theirs who had been imprisoned for four days in the gendarmes' post and had been tortured during investigation.

"At 1 45 p.m , on May 25, 1943, a detachment of the Home Army carried out an attack on a train carrying political prisoners from the ' Zamek ' prison in Lublin to Oswiecim concentration camp. Forty-nine prisoners were released. Four of the escorting Germans were killed."

During the last four months of 1943, 652 soldiers of the Home Army and many other prisoners arrested by Germans were set free.

The German terror laid its hand heavily on Poland. The sifting out of all elements dangerous to the invader was most thorough. Rounding-up of individuals for forced labour in Germany was one of the many methods used to weaken the force of the nation. The blockading of houses and streets, the searching of towns and villages, was a regular activity, and the inhabitants were taken off to prison, to concentration camps, to labour camps in Germany, or sent to work behind the Eastern front.

At first the Germans tried to strike directly at the Underground, but when this proved an impossibility, their net was flung blindly over an ever-widening circle. It is difficult to give accurate figures, but there were days in Warsaw when the round-up affected thousands of people. In the city of Sobolow Podlaski (20,000 inhabitants), eight hundred people alone were arrested on August 22, 1943 Then there was the destruction of property, and the murder of human beings. In July, 1943, a document posted up in Bialystok proclaimed that in revenge for " bandit attacks," in which eleven Germans had lost their lives, the occupying authorities had burnt down the village of Szaulicze, and shot all its inhabitants. In addition, an unknown number of inhabitants from Bialystok itself were shot, and also fifty people from the village of Wasilkowo. Ninety persons from every town in the district, chiefly lawyers, doctors, local officials and teachers, together with the families of these people, were also shot.

The Polish Underground Authorities replied to all these acts of terror with reprisal after reprisal. The *Buletyn Informacyjny* (Information Bulletin) published in Warsaw, stated on June 23, 1943 :

"At the beginning of June the Germans surrounded the village of Sochy near Zwierzyniec (Lublin province), and their aeroplanes dropped high explosive and incendiary bombs. The fleeing inhabitants were fired on with machine-guns. Only twenty people escaped out of the village of three hundred and sixty inhabitants. The village of Szarajowka in Bilgoraj district met with a similar fate Here a punitive expedition murdered over one hundred men, women and children. In the same county, the village of Jozefow was burnt down and destroyed and the people perished."

The same Information Bulletin, in its issue for August 1, 1943 :

" In reply to the massacre of the village of Sochy, which we reported in an earlier issue, Siedlisko, the model village of German colonists near Zamosc has been burnt down by our detachments. One hundred and forty farms were fired, and sixty Germans perished. These German colonists had been given houses taken from their evicted Polish owners."

The Germans did not under-estimate the threat which this Polish Underground Army constituted, and their officials were constantly warned of possible dangers and recommended not to live singly but in groups (a special section in every town was reserved for them), and to avoid walking in the street unaccompanied while the soldiers were forbidden to leave their barracks alone. Every German was continually reminded that he was in enemy country and warned to act accordingly. This system of security, forced on the occupant, on its officialdom and its army, meant a heavy strain on German man-power

The *Information Bulletin* for June 23, 1943, gave the following picture of the state of affairs in Warsaw :—

"A cordon of German police, armed with rifles and machine-guns, is posted at every two paces on both sides of the street. There is a crowd of plain-clothes police and spies on the pavements The trams make the entire journey from one end to the other without stopping anywhere. Armed police on motor-cycles and in cars patrol the roads, many a passer-by is stopped and his documents examined, especially if he is carrying a despatch case or packets Finally, a procession of two closed cars, convoyed by numerous cars filled with armed police, tears past at a furious speed.

" This is what Warsaw looks like when Governor-General Frank arrives for a couple of days and has to go from one street to another A necessary precaution, since an almost successful attempt was made on his life at the end of 1943. His train was blown up but he was rescued."

The sentences imposed on certain particularly tyrannical occupants by the Military Tribunals of the Home Army were invariably carried out. The pages of the German newspapers published in Poland contained lists of German officials who had " fallen for the Fuehrer and the Reich in Poland " Usually these notices gave no indication as to how the death had occurred, but Major Schmidt, for instance, the Commandant of the notorious concentration camp at Majdanek, was killed by a soldier of the Home Army on May 21, 1943, and on the previous day the Deputy-Commandant of the S.S , Spielhamer, was also dealt with. By an order of the ' Directorate of Civil Resistance,' one captain and two lieutenants convicted of torturing prisoners were killed on May 22, at 9-50 a.m., in the Cafe Adria in Warsaw. To avoid harming the innocent, bombs and hand-grenades were not used, the sentence was executed with a revolver. The Polish soldier (a locksmith by the name of Jan Kryst) detailed to carry out the sentence knew when he entered that cafe he would not come out alive.

The Chief of the Special Bureau, whose task was to counter the activities of the Polish Underground, the Obersturm-Feuhrer Lechner, died at the hand of a soldier of the Home Army on October 2, 1943. During the first four months of 1943, according to the Report of the ' Directorate of Civil Resistance ' (partly published in Britain), 1,175 German Gestapo and 1,051 German military or civil servants had been executed *

* *Dziennik Polski*, February 22nd, 1944.

II.—TIMES OF TROUBLE

FROM HITLER TO THE UNITED NATIONS

. . . At the signing of the Soviet-Japan Pact . . . in the Kremlin . . . Raising his glass (to toast the new friendship) Stalin shouted:

" Banzai for His Majesty, the Emperor," and declared that a diplomatic relation, once pledged, is unchangeable, however much ideologies may differ. Matsuoka toasted Stalin, and said.

" The Treaty had been made. I do not lie. If I lie, my head shall be yours If you lie, be sure I will come for your head "

Stalin seemed embarrassed Then he replied: " My head is important to my country. So is yours to your country. Let's take care to keep both our heads on our shoulders "

At the station, Stalin tapped Matsuoka on the shoulder and said · " The European problem can be solved in a natural way if Japan and the Soviets co-operate "

" Not only the European problem," Matsuoka answered, "Asia also can be solved." " The whole world can be settled," said Stalin.

(Tolishuss, Otto, *Tokyo Record*, p. 107, April 22, 1941).

Thus, between two Imperialist Powers was concluded the most important Pact (at least in their opinion) of the twentieth century They had both converted their States into a war machine in order to attempt a conquest, the parallel of which has never been known in world history.

The context of their mutual pact was briefly summarised in these two sentences of the partners. " The European problem can be solved. the Asiatic problem can be solved . . . if Japan and the Soviets co-operate." It could only mean—Europe for Russia ! . . . Pacific for Japan !

If in the nineteenth century the Russians had been in some doubt as to whether or not their fate lay in Europe or Asia (there had been two schools of thought on this question), now, in the spring of 1941, they proclaimed that the future of Asiatic Russia, whose borders sink in the Arctic and Pacific Oceans to rise in the heights of Tian Schan and Pamir, lay in Europe. By the Pact of April, 1941, the partners believed that a basis for the commencement of a new phase in world history had been stabilised Japan was given a free hand to attack the conquests of the ' white man ' on the Pacific. Russia could now plan an action in Europe on a scale never before known and which might, in fact, be compared, if indeed such a comparison be possible, to the Mongol invasion, which had resulted in the creation of the great continental Empire embracing Asia from the Pacific, and China as far as the border of Poland in Europe.

On June 22, 1941, however, the greatest and most ambitious plan ever created in Russia and advocated by Lenin, the plan for the conquest of Europe at the end of a Second World War, appeared to collapse like a house of cards. Numerically the greatest army built in one generation by a constant and colossal effort and sacrifice, where, for the sake of armament, the people had been deprived of even bread . . . this gigantic army, predestined to spread the power of Russia westward under the slogan of Revolution, was forced into an encounter, not with a weakened Europe, exhausted by a long war and undermined by strife and conflicts, as Stalin had anticipated (see Vol 1, p.124), but with the victorious German Army strengthened by the output of the factories of all Europe.

Stalin, who a few years ago had solemnly declared that the Red Army would beat the enemy " on the roads leading to the Soviet Union," was now compelled to watch the front-line of this same army crumple to pieces in the battle of the frontier, to watch the relentless overthrow of the second-line; and to witness the lightning speed with which the remnants retreated to the Dniepr river, then to the Volga, then to the Caucasus—a retreat thousands of miles into the depth of the Russian Empire.

The German radio resounded with triumphant fanfares glorifying the Wehrmacht with each seizure of a new town, after each passage of another river, after the capture of hundreds of thousands or millions of Russian soldiers. " Soon," the German speakers declared with glee, " the last blow would fall which will finish the Soviet armed forces and then the Soviet regime." But this regime was hard to kill The Kremlin paid a terrible price for its mistake in judgment, for its wishful thinking and the desire to keep its forces untouched until the end of the war. The measures adopted in the Civil War were brought into use once again. Political commissars were once more appointed among the forces,* deserters were shot en masse, the newly created marshals, generals and colonels were removed by thousands, the system of command overhauled and all panic suppressed with an iron ruthlessness. The Army, although still in retreat, again became a disciplined instrument in the hands of its leader. The Soviet regime had been saved. Stalin had surmounted the crisis, and when Hitler claimed, in October, 1941, that " a few more days and victory would be final," Stalin alone in the Kremlin, after the departure of the Government to Kuibyshev, knew the end was much further away than this, for the fast approaching winter would allow him to develop all the accumulated strength of Russia and send more forces, now in the rear, to the front line.

The first six months of this war were the most tragic for the master

* The abolition of the political commissars had taken place after the war against Finland, Soviet dictatorship blamed them for the fiasco in the early periods of this war. They were restored under the name of ' military commissars ' on July 16th, 1941. This was a triumph of the Party.

of the Kremlin as a leader, and for Russia as a State. The great preparations for a war, and the experiment of converting the ' Gold Horde into a Steel Horde ' proved, when the test came, to be obviously inadequate. Despite their gigantic efforts, the Soviets, short of intellectuals exterminated in the purges, and working with under-nourished employees in the factories, with an army surcharged with useless political apparatus and thinking in the terms of ' class warfare,' ' world revolution ' and ' Communism,' were considerably weaker than Germany. Russia alone could not arrest or defeat Hitler. Therefore, the Kremlin, who for over two years had coldly and contemptuously brushed aside Britain's hand extended to her in friendship, over and over again, was now forced to ask for help, to look around for Allies. A complete right-about face ! Russia, while working unitedly with Germany, had been supplying her with raw materials ; now the Soviets were obliged to ask Britain and the U.S.A. to send her armaments. Enormous as the Russian stocks of weapons had been, all the supplies of the front and second line armies were lost during those first few months. The chaos existing on the railways was so great that, although the Soviets possessed a vast quantity of war material behind the Ural, it seemed more straight-forward to import from abroad. Thus the British and, afterwards, the American convoys, escorted partly by Polish warships and with the goods partly carried on Polish merchantmen (such were the strange vagaries of history), began to carry supplies to Russia over the Northern Route.*

This sudden change of front, this change-over from enemy to friend, this reversal in the direction of the streams of war supplies, could pass unquestioned in Russia, where the word of the Kremlin's master was law, but it was not sufficient for Britain, for the U.S.A , and for the whole world, who found it impossible to forget over-night the former attitude of the Soviets during the past two years of war.

Stalin's first action to dispel the mistrust of the peoples of the United Nations against Moscow was to change the slogans of his foreign policy, to apparently renounce the imperialist claims of Russia. During that period of the Russians' withdrawal on the front, it was obviously much more advantageous for the Soviets to adopt the role of the ' victim of an unexpected aggression.' Therefore, the Kremlin remodelled its previous views on the war-aims of the Allies. The anti-German Powers, after two years of bloody struggle, impeded heretofore by the actions of Russia, were now no longer waging an " imperialist war " in the eyes of that same country, but were fighting a " defensive and just war." When the Germans had surrounded Leningrad on three sides and were approaching Moscow (Lenin's coffin had been hastily removed to a place of safety), Stalin made a speech on October 6, the Anniversary of the Revolution.

* An account of this convoy work can be found in B Pawlowicz's diary of a ' Convoy to Russia,' see *O.R.P. Garland*, London, 1943.

He adopted an entirely different tone to his speeches during the time when the Soviets were undertaking the Polish invasion, the occupation of the Baltic States and the invasion of Finland. He spoke as the leader of a peace-loving country:

"We have not, and cannot have, any war aims such as the seizure of foreign territories and the subjugation of foreign peoples—whether it be peoples and territories of Europe or peoples and territories of Asia, including Iran Our first aim is to liberate our territories and our peoples from the German Fascist yoke.

"We have not, and cannot have, any war aims such as that of imposing our will and our regime upon the Slavonic or other enslaved nations of Europe, who are expecting our help. Our aim is to help these nations in their struggle for liberation which they are waging against Hitler's tyranny and then leave it to them quite freely to organise their life on their lands as they think fit."

"The Germans," Stalin again emphasised, in his Order of the Day to the Red Army on November 7, "are waging a war of annexation, an unjust war for the seizure of foreign territory and the conquest of other peoples." While the Soviets, on the contrary, are conducting a "national" war, not a "predatory imperialist, but a patriotic one." "The task of the Red Army," wrote Stalin, "is to liberate our Soviet territory from the German invaders, to liberate the people of our villages and towns from the yoke of the enemy"

In his next Order of the Day on May 1, 1942, to the Red Army, Stalin, as C.-in-C, once more underlined the character which his Army was to play in this new war:—"Comrades, we are fighting for our country! For justice and freedom! We have no desire to seize foreign territories or conquer foreign people."

Thus it was plainly and clearly stated and the ruling classes of the Capitalist Powers, with whom fate had compelled the Soviets to unite, or, more accurately speaking, to fight the same enemy, had to be contented with this The Soviets realised that the anxiety and fear of Communism must be dispelled, and pro-Russian sentiments in Britain and elsewhere be induced to blossom forthwith. The Communist Soviets were dead! A nationalist Russia had been re-born! The Kremlin was renouncing its world-reaching plans of conquest, soon it was even to issue orders to dissolve the Comintern The eyes of the world must be focussed on the battle-ground, on the 'fighting, bleeding Russian people, desperately defending their country in the hour of their greatest trial, when the foundation of their Empire was trembling beneath the blows of the German warriors.' The Kremlin's overlord, the "God-chosen leader" as the Moscow patriarch now called him, appealed to the patriotism of the Great Russians. In his Order of the Day to the Red Army on November 7, Stalin inserted the astonishing invocation: "Let us be inspired in this war by the valiant images of our great ancestors, Alexander Nevski, Dimitri Donskoy, Kuzma Minin, Pojarski, Alexander Suvorov and Mikhail Kutuzov . . . and Lenin."

That Suvorov personified Russia's ruthless imperialism* (against which Stalin's country Georgia had fought so stubbornly and valiantly) was immaterial to those people of the Soviet Empire, stuffed for twenty-five years with Communist slogans, but what did seem extraordinary was that these slogans were now omitted from the Kremlin's new orders. Marx, Engels, Paris Commune and 'World Revolution' had been shelved, while the images of the Great Russian heroes and national slogans were brought out into the limelight.

The Finnish campaign, and the first months of the war against Germany, revealed that the 'Party army' which had sufficed in the days of the Civil War, was insufficient in a war of international dimensions, despite being equipped with modern weapons The Soviets were forced to recognise that the tradition of their heroic era was too fresh, were obliged to revert to the ideas of primitive nationalism, which they had treated with such contempt heretofore. This change in the character of the Kremlin's propaganda (fostered internally since 1936 parallel with the preparations for war), was to astonish the vast array of the people of the Soviet Union. The Kremlin, by this verbal change, by the appeals to the 'Soviet fatherland' and 'Soviet patriotism,' seemed to have descended to the common level of the average bourgeois state concerned only with the defence of its own country. Thus the foundation for an understanding with the Allies was laid.

Lenin, whose thoughts have been collected into thirty large volumes, and who left instructions for the creation of the 'dictatorship of the proletariat' to cover, it seemed, every incident and for every day of the year, preached that, in the development of a revolution, the aim cannot be achieved in one stroke. He compared it to scaling a steep summit From time to time "the necessity arises to make a few paces backward and walk in zig-zags"

This step backward which the Kremlin had now taken was also necessitated by reason of its inability to find in Europe, either among the enemy or among the Allies, any trace of dry-rot or moral weakness The fighting Powers were still in the fullness of their strength, the organisation of their State machinery had been untouched. There was no room in Europe yet for a revolution or revolutionary intervention from outside.

* Suvorov, the greatest military executor of Catherine the Second's imperialist policy, won particular renown for his slaughter of Praga, a suburb of Warsaw, which his troops had taken by storm in 1794 All the defenders and inhabitants of Praga were killed—an action which resulted in an outburst of great indignation throughout Europe Campbell in his *Pleasures of Hope*, wrote.

The sun went down, nor ceased the carnage there,
Tumultuous murder shook the midnight air,
On Praga's proud arch the fires of ruin glow,
His blood-dyed waters murmuring far below,
The storm prevails, the rampart yields a way,
Bursts the wild cry of horror and dismay!
Hark, as the smouldering piles with thunder fall,
A thousand shrieks for hopeless mercy call.

The Kremlin had been prematurely caught in the wheels of the chariot of the god-of-war, and all its propaganda regarding 'revolution,' 'international proletariat,' and 'class warfare' was out-of-date for the present. No one in Europe at this stage had the time nor the opportunity to ponder over the abstract problems such as these; even the Communist parties in the different countries, who until now had accused the Allies of waging an 'imperialist war,' had changed their policy. During the autumn of 1941, while the German gale was sweeping over the plains of the Soviet Empire, the Kremlin was entirely pre-occupied with saving itself from disaster. For the first time in twenty-five years, Soviet Communism, facing defeat, stood in the position of defence. Hitler's action had swung the wheel of Russia's foreign policy over 180 degrees. Through the medium of the British Government, they now hurriedly resumed diplomatic relations with those anti-German Powers whose envoys, not so long ago, had been unceremoniously evicted from Moscow.

The first and most important agreement had to be made with Poland. Moscow afterwards resumed relations with the Belgian, Norwegian, Yugoslavian and Greek Governments, and the Czecho-Slovakian Provisional Government. The Kremlin recognised the National Committee of General de Gaulle's Free French Movement, and on September 27, 1941, signed an agreement with Dr. Benes in London for the formation of a Czech Army in the U.S.S.R.

Thus, as long as the Germans were still marching steadily eastward, and the Kremlin saw the handwriting on the wall, Stalin's foreign policy was one of moderation, the policy of any peace-loving country.* No imperialist slogan was permitted to rear its head in the Soviet propaganda. "We have no desire to seize foreign territory or conquer foreign people" was all which appeared. The thesis of the Atlantic Charter now seemed suitable ideological grounds for the Soviet's participation in the Coalition. The eagerness of the Kremlin to gain the help of Britain and the U.S. even went as far as Stalin seeing no reason why he should not sign the Treaty on July 2, 1941, with Britain, "laying the foundation for a joint action in the organisation of peace for the world." He agreed on a "collective security" in the future, strengthened by the military forces of both powers. By this the "independence and sovereignity of the smaller states was fully guaranteed."

In this first period of Russia's participation in the Second Great War, it seemed as if she had completely discarded the traditional nature of her policy and of a Communist conception of war. The Comintern was banished to the back row, its role as a tool of the Soviet foreign policy visibly reduced. The Communist parties of Great Britain and U.S. were now instructed to act in their respective countries as the 'competitors'

* No change was made in the internal policy of Russia. The reins of the regime were not loosened. The political convicts in the labour camps were not released. No concessions, no amnesty, no political mildness was granted to anyone.

of the thorough-going nationalist parties, as the ' champions of a holy war,' and in this role the ' supporters of revolution,' called on their Governments to urge an increase in the war effort and demanded supplies for Russia, to be paid for out of the pockets of the British and American tax payers

According to the Kremlin's conception of war, the war of the ' entire world against the Soviet Socialist State ' or (according to the times) the war of ' Imperialism against Communism ' should, and would, last until one or the other side was able to shout ' Halali ' over the dead body of its mortal enemy. In this conception have they been born and bred in Moscow, and it would be childish to imagine that in one day, or even one year, all this ingrained feeling, this corner-stone of their faith, would suddenly vanish. The war which Soviet Communism had waged was merely temporarily suspended in 1941, and there can only be suppositions as to when, and under what form, this struggle would recommence. As it soon transpired, however, and owing to the modern methods of psychological warfare, the Kremlin was able to renew its ' holy war ' against the world as soon as the dawn of German defeat began to steal over the horizon.

The war of Germany (and later of Japan) against the ' rich powers of the world ' left the Kremlin unmoved. The more these ' Imperialists ' fought among themselves the better, was the attitude they had adopted, but unfortunately for the Soviets they found themselves drawn into the conflict. Therefore the one aim of the Kremlin's policy was to extract the country as quickly and as completely as possible from such an inauspicious position, and for this reason the Soviets showed so little inclination to merge with the Allies during the years of war which followed. Moscow had always conducted real politics—and underlined its independence at every opportunity—breaking without hesitation yesterday's charters, declarations and agreements. The Kremlin, remembering the thesis of Lenin that every great revolution is linked up with war, was looking beyond the horizon of the existing conflict Stalin, referring to this thesis, had remarked several years previously :*

" It is scarcely possible to doubt but that the Second War against the Soviet Union will lead to a complete defeat of the attackers, a revolution in several countries of Europe and Asia, and a riot against the bourgeois landowner governments."

At that moment the Soviet Union must be ready. By threatening France and Britain with a separately concluded peace with Germany, the Tsarist Government had, during the First Great War, gained the connivance of the Allies to the incorporation into the Russian Empire of the countries reaching far to the West. The Bolsheviks, pre-occupied with the stabilisation of their regime, had not been interested in those

* Stalin's speech at the Seventeenth Congress of the Party in 1939.

days in the secret agreements, and while the Allies were still fighting on the Western front they had concluded a peace with Germany at Brest-Litovsk.* With this record in the history of the Soviet Government, the fact could not be excluded that, should Germany, not Hitler's, but some revolutionary or even a strongly conservative Germany, stretch out a hand to Moscow, and if on some future day this offer should suit her purpose, she, Russia, would conclude a separate armistice or a separate peace with that country.

The Soviet Premier need merely repeat Molotov's explanation of the 1939 Treaty with Hitler. "Yesterday we were enemies—to-day we are friends," and Stalin's words. "It is not our aim to destroy Germany,"† would suffice the peoples of the Soviet Empire.

The knowledge in London and Washington that Moscow considered herself free to change the camp in which she would fight, or merely stand, the knowledge of Russia's political flexibility at which Moscow constantly hinted one way or another, lay as a heavy cloud on the relations between the Soviets and the Allies. This fear of a victorious Russia in Central Europe in the place of Germany, made Chamberlain (even after he had realised that without the support of the Red Army it would be impossible to stop Hitler), unwilling to form an alliance with the Kremlin. This same fear, but now grounded on the supposition that by Russia eventually concluding a separate peace with Germany or by her defeating that country, she (Russia) would become the dominant Power in Europe, was to arouse in Great Britain, and to some extent in the U.S., those same sentiments in relation to the Soviets, which, in the case of Germany, had led to Munich. Thus a policy of appeasement towards Moscow was started in Britain when Churchill made his historic speech on June 22, 1941, offering unconditional British aid to Russia. There was astonishment in Moscow for the Soviet rulers had been firmly convinced that they could not expect any help from London, where, as they knew, the opinion on Russia was divided. Britain would, no doubt, they anticipated, quietly look on, just as they themselves had looked on during those two critical years of that Island's struggle, accusing her meanwhile of imperialist designs. Therefore they were frankly amazed by the British attitude. After the first short moment of surprise, Moscow at once passed

* The Soviets had condemned the war and "the secret treaties with Russia's Allies" by which the Tsarist government undertook . . to send millions of Russian soldiers to support the "allies on the imperialist fronts and to protect the tremendous profits of the British and French capitalists." (*History of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union*, English version, Moscow, 1942, p 101) "The Soviet Government," runs the quoted official *History*, "called upon all the belligerent peoples and their governments to start immediate negotiations for a just, democratic peace . . . the Allies—Great Britain and France—refused to accept the proposal of the Soviet Government. In view of this refusal, the Soviet Government decided to start negotiations with Germany and Austria."

"On February 23rd, the Central Committee decided to accept the terms of the German Command and to sign the peace treaty" (p. 215).

† Stalin, J., Order of the Day to the Red Army, February 23rd, 1943.

over to a diplomatic attack. Her aim was to retain as much as possible of the booty she had gained through her co-operation with Germany. In this she partially succeeded for the time being, since the British Government and the U.S made no mention of the Baltic States, nor of Bessarabia Through British mediation, the Polish question had been temporarily settled, with the balance well in favour of Russia. At that particular stage of events it was difficult to deprive Poland of half her territory. The text of the new Polish-Russian Treaty was plain, but the British Foreign Office, however, appeared willing to interpret this Treaty just as Moscow desired. A fact which the British Press made evident in subsequent articles.

This was the first moment when Britain's policy towards Moscow found itself treading the well-known road of appeasement. And as only Poland in the Middle Zone was able to put up a political resistance to Moscow, Poland, from that moment, was to become the test of the policies of the Soviets and the United Nations. Any concession extorted from Poland for the benefit of Russia would therefore symbolize a political set-back for the United Nations.

"MONTAGNES RUSSES . . ."

Frequenters of Vienna's Prater or Copenhagen's Tivoli will know the 'Rutschbahn' or 'Montagnes Russes.'

The dizzy switchback, the small carriages which transport the adventurous passengers, with break-neck speed, through dark abysses, tunnels, bridges, mountains, hazards of all kinds! Above the rattle and noise, one hears the laughter of the people, the screams of the frightened, and sometimes even the weeping of the small passengers, as the carriage gathers speed on the steep slopes before plunging into darkness.

Some are ill on this 'joyride.' The less-hardened children cry

Polish-Russian relations during the last ten years vividly recall a journey on the 'Montagnes Russes.' The Non-Aggression Pact of 1932, the aggression of September 17, 1939, the 'plebiscite' performed in Eastern Poland, the lightning metamorphosis from Polish to Soviet citizens. The deportation of millions of these new Soviet citizens into the abyss of Russia, to the zones of the 'tundra' and the 'tayga,' many sentenced to death, others thrown into jail . .

Then the Agreement of July, 1941. The Polish Anthem is played in the Kremlin. The formation of the Polish Army in Russia, with the simultaneous mysterious spiriting away of several thousands of Polish officers. Many assurances of the future Poland to be, the 'great' and 'strong' and the abolition of the Ribbentrop-Molotov Pact. The release of a small percentage of Poles from Russia and the holding back of hundreds of thousands of others in the jails and labour camps The threat and, indeed, the attempt, to form a 'Polish Government' in Moscow from the 'Union of Polish Patriots.' The publishing of the death verdict executed long before on the members of the 'Bund,' so suddenly suspected of espionage

on behalf of Germany. The findings of the graves in Katyn. And once again a severance of the diplomatic relations between Poland and Russia.

Stalin's declaration regarding a 'strong, independent Poland' and her future alliance with Russia. The accusations made against the entire Polish Embassy in Russia of espionage for Germany, etc, etc.

(Nowakowski, Z. "Montagnes Russes." *Wiadomosci Polskie*, Polish News, London, 1943).

The results of the first phase of the Soviet's new foreign policy, after the Germans had invaded their country, were to prove exceptionally favourable to Russia. Old grievances were forgotten and old scores wiped out. Enormous quantities of supplies were hastily sent from Britain and the U.S., and the future of inter-Allied relations was placed with every confidence into the hands of Russia as Great Britain carefully piloted her into the circle of the United Nations.

The general aim of the Soviets with regard to Poland had already been clearly presented by Molotov, in May, 1939 (see Vol. I, p. 129), when Russia first demanded 'bases' in her Eastern provinces. The Poles had refused, but later, however, through the agreement with Germany and subsequent invasion, the Kremlin was able to attain its goal After the German attack on Russia and when it became obvious that it would be difficult to dominate Poland, Moscow tried to drag the Polish Government in London within the sphere of Russian political influence, and to remodel it into a puppet government, or, as they were soon to term it, into a 'friendly' government.

After the signing of the July Treaty of 1941, the Soviets immediately adopted an attacking position. Following Russian tradition and custom, they began to put their demands to Poland and, that country, who as a victim of their aggression should have received indemnities, soon found herself forced to protect her possessions against these unprecedented claims of the Soviets The situation was further complicated by the fact that, just then, Russia was holding over a million Poles as hostages, the man-power upon whom the Polish Government was relying for a further active participation in the war. How, and to what extent, this stock of people was to be employed in the fight for the Allied cause, depended therefore upon the Soviets. To neutral observers in New York and London, it seemed that a full concord between the two Powers would have been the natural sequence, but as events were soon to show, the Soviets, with great foresight, taking a long-term view, beyond the war, were correctly appraising the fact that unless Poland could be tamed here and now, unless she were degraded to a condition of vassalhood and used as an instrument of Russian policy, then the temporary war-time benefit which she (Russia) might gain from the creation of a large Polish Army on her soil, would have no great value in comparison with the outcome of the existence of such a body. Its presence at the end of hostilities would be incompatible with Russia's post-war imperialist aims, therefore, this

army on Russian soil was never allowed to come into being. Thus the policy of both parties was neither common nor conducted on parallel lines.

The policy of Poland under Pilsudski's regime had been based on the principle that Poland, united with her smaller neighbours and endangered to the same extent by both Germany and Russia, must maintain a balance between these two Powers. She had no other choice, for to unite with either was self-destruction. Union with an imperialist Power has ever meant that the weaker party is predestined to a slavery and death as a state and nation But the basic thesis of Pilsudski's policy was not realised for Poland, during the short time at her disposal (18 years in all), had been unable to arm her neutrality powerfully and gather allies around her by whose aid she might have been able to survive the blows which could fall from the West or East.

Contrary to Pilsudski, Sikorski belonged to those who thought Poland should depend on one of her stronger neighbours and during the First Great War had leaned towards Austria in this respect, but after the collapse of Poland in 1939, he was prepared to admit that it should now be Russia.

" Poland in her geographical position," he declared " cannot have two enemies, and she must smooth over her historical argument into good neighbourliness with one of them. And, since Germany was, and will be, the mortal enemy of the Polish people, and will endeavour to exterminate them, biologically, economically and culturally, the Polish-Russian relations must be based on a firm and sincere understanding, which would, at the same time, take into account the essential interests, honour and rights of the Polish people."*

" So, imbued with the spirit of political realism, the Polish Government" declared Sikorski at the opening of the National Council in London on February 24, 1942, " was the first to stretch out the hand of friendship to Soviet Russia." The main weakness in Sikorski's interpretation of the Russian policy lay in the fact that neither Tsarist Russia nor Soviet Russia had at any time sincerely wished to take into consideration " the essential interests, honour and rights of the Polish people," but, as an imperialist Power, perpetually endeavoured to subordinate them.

At the end of the eighteenth century, Poland had witnessed the growth of despotic Powers on both her frontiers. Seeking for the best way to survive, three groups of political thought emerged. One wished to seek the support of the Tsar of Russia, the second of the Prussian king, while the third party pinned its faith exclusively on the strength of Poland. She should stand alone ! The first two groups emphasised the fact that they were following a ' policy of realism,' because of the might of their neighbours and that Poland must lean on one of them. But it was through the policy of the third, which pierced beyond the mist of the actual period, that the Polish nation was able to survive throughout the dark century of occupation , when, as Joseph Conrad wrote, " Polish nationality was not so much alive as surviving, which persisted in thinking, breathing, speaking, hoping and suffering

* " Testament polityczny Sikorskiego " (Sikorski's Political Testament), *Dziennik Polski*, October 1st, 1943.

in its grave, railed in by millions of bayonets and triple sealed with the seals of three great Empires."

The Poles considered Tsardom to be their greatest foe, and only fifty years previously Jan Poplawski, the creator of the National Democratic Party, had proclaimed Prussia as the chief foe of Poland, and had advocated the necessity of achieving a compromise with Russia. When in 1904, Russia was shaken by revolution and the power of the Tsar was waning, the Polish National Democratic Party began the task of breaking down the traditional anti-Russian front of Polish political opinion. The leader of the Party, Roman Dmowski, believing in a war with Germany, against a coalition, comprised of France, England and Russia, admitted to the principle of the formation of a parallel anti-German front in Poland, so that, following a victory of the Allies, Polish people would hold the right to ask for a union of their partitioned territories at least Dmowski's idea was 'with a weak Russia against a strong Germany.' Sikorski picked up the thread of this same idea, but applied it under different conditions, since it was to be 'with a strong Russia against a weak Germany.' But a strong Russia was in no need of the support of Poland.

The Poland of 1941 appeared extremely weak in Moscow's eyes, and if Stalin resumed diplomatic relations with the Polish Government in London, it was above all for moral reasons. These reasons had become extremely valuable at that particular moment in the Soviet policy of turning the 'three horse team' of the Russian Empire into reverse. But above all other considerations, the Kremlin had indeed an urgent need of Poland in 1941, for was she not a 'synonyme' of England? And the help of Britain seemed to be a matter of life and death to the Kremlin when the terrific German storm was striking at its Empire.

In addition, Poland represented a certain value in the battle itself, when her exceptional position in the centre of the net-work of German communications at the rear of their Eastern front was taken into consideration The Bolsheviks, experienced and living in the tradition of civil war, highly appreciated the possibility of warfare in the rear of the enemy, and the result of the action of the German Fifth Column Army in Poland in 1939 had only served to strengthen this opinion in Moscow.

These were the main reasons for the renewal of Russia's diplomatic relations with Poland. But, since Moscow strictly adhered to the principle of realism in its policy, the very day, indeed the very moment, when these reasons no longer existed, Stalin did not hesitate to sever immediately with consummate ease all relations with that country.

The Polish Government, like the British, found, in their first contact with Russia in 1941, that information regarding the conditions of life in that country had not been exaggerated. The first transport of several hundred Polish airmen who arrived in the autumn (via Archangel to the Clyde) on a Russian ship, made an unforgettable impression on those who went to the port to welcome them. They met not men, but wrecks,

who had long ago been men ; figures with grey-green visages rather than living creatures, toothless in the majority of cases, skeletons on which rags were suspended. While such a collection would not particularly impress the onlooker in Russia, here, under the sky of Scotland, the appearance of these people was incredible in itself. And those who had come to greet them, the Poles and the British, found it hard to restrain their emotion.

This first batch from Russia was to be followed by others, and Scotland listened to their talks, more of death than of life in the cellars of Soviet dictatorship, where as slaves they had been thrown to rot. It was in those early days, when hope still existed that all the Poles would be released according to the concluded treaty, and the Polish Press refrained therefore from any comment or criticism regarding the condition of their people.

When it later became obvious that the Soviet Government was not fulfilling the Treaty, that all the Poles were not being released from the dungeons and labour camps, and furthermore, that only a small percentage were getting out of Russia, the Polish Government, to keep the ' front of the Allies ' unshaken, and in order to extract as many of its citizens as possible, continued to remain silent on this subject. Not only did it remain silent, but it deliberately suppressed the rising voice of indignation among the Poles in Great Britain and America. Soldiers and civilians coming from the Soviet Union were forbidden to relate their experiences or to discuss Russia. Sikorski hoped that this one-sided allegiance to the Russian partner would sooner or later be repaid by the Soviets, and an honest settlement of Polish-Russian affairs would in the end be achieved. Therefore he publicly underlined the good relations which he held with Russia and emphasised over and over again the goodwill of ' both ' parties on all questions.

Russia had her own method and style of diplomacy, which was linked with centuries of ceaseless conquest. The first rule of this diplomacy was to place exorbitant demands before each neighbour in turn, with the intention of gradually making him accustomed to them until such time as these demands could be realised in one way or another.

The Kremlin attempted no other line in relation to Sikorski's Government, and one demand followed on the heels of another, one note after the other, each expressing its own particular interpretation of the paragraphs of the concluded Treaty and each a complete reversal of all commitments. In August came the demand to form a division from the starving Polish ex-prisoners within six weeks and to send them post-haste to the front. The next month the Soviets were anxious that a revolt should be created in the rear of the enemy in German-occupied Poland. On December 1, action was taken to hamper the formation of the Polish Army in Russia by claiming all Poland's citizens of non-Polish blood as

Soviet citizens, and by generally dealing with the Poles as they wished, giving amnesty to some and not to others, and so forth. All of which 'realistic' policy was intended to convince the Polish Government in London, and the Polish exiles in Russia, that their fate was dependent entirely on the will of the Soviet Government and the whims of the N K V.D. Since the Polish Government refused to allow itself to be exploited politically, they were of no further value Sikorski had followed closely the lines of the British policy in relation to Russia, i.e , an attitude of compliance and the postponement of all delicate problems with the object of finally settling them at the peace conference But while it was an easy policy for the British, since the concessions would not affect their own interests to any great extent, it was an extremely difficult policy for the Poles to follow since the problems concerned were the existence of the Polish State and the question of life or death to the many Poles held in Russia Thus, by the time the Soviets had realised that they were once again in a position to make fresh demands, Sikorski had gone too far to turn back and he was forced to continue his policy of appeasement by further concessions until his stock was exhausted and the point reached " beyond which no Pole can go." Sikorski did not wish to recognise the failure of his policy and he therefore found himself in a difficult position. He tried hard not to lose face, hoping that by some miracle the Soviet policy would change. In an endeavour to conceal his misgivings, he was obliged to conceal the true situation even after the greatness of the disaster had surpassed his own lack of success and reached the dimensions of a national catastrophe. And so, both in his statements and in the official Press, the Polish Soviet relations were to follow a fantastic course quite apart from the reality.

In May, 1942, the news of the thousands of missing people reached London and re-affirmed the suspicions that many Poles were still being held in the Soviet labour camps.* In the summer the Polish Press in America revealed the case of the missing officers, expressing the fear that they might have been handed over to the Germans or murdered, either by the Russians or the Germans or by both. The Polish Government had already known in the October of 1941 that these men were missing, but no one had had the slightest inkling of the incredible fate of these officers. The anxiety of the Polish emigrees in Britain and the Poles in the U.S.A. was to augment with each succeeding day.

The Government of National Unity was to disagree with Sikorski and finally split over the Polish-Russian Pact of 1941, and the National Council, which had been formed in France (and from which he had received no

* The British press approached this question cautiously *The Review of World Affairs* on June 1st, 1942, for instance, stated .—

" Unfortunately, several thousand officers are still missing and the chances of tracing them are now remote as not even O.G.P.U. can say where they are This great tragedy has much disturbed our Polish Allies . . ."

support over his deal with the Soviets) was dissolved. Sikorski, assisted by a number of Socialists and with the full support of the Peasant Party, together with a few members of the National Democrats, who were forthwith disowned by their Party, formed a new Cabinet, while a fresh National Council, composed from his supporters, came into being

At this crisis in home politics, the control exercised by Polish public opinion over their Government would have been nil, had it not been for their Press It is necessary here to explain to the reader that, among the Polish people wherever they are, the Press has an exceptional influence on political questions and in public life. This is mainly a result of the nation's struggle for freedom which had lasted for over a hundred years No Press in the world can compare with the Polish Press in this respect An article published by any well-known political writer is frequently of greater value in the eyes of the public, and of much greater importance, than the speech of any Minister. And Sikorski was to find the majority of the Polish Press both in Britain and in America from the first bitterly opposed to his policy of concessions.

British censorship limited its scope officially to security matters, but the Polish Government now requested their newspapers to present all editorials for political censorship. By this method the Government was able to keep a restraining hand on the tone of the Press, particularly where it concerned the question of Polish-Russian relations. As Russian pressure on the Polish Government increased, so the latter warned the Polish Press to exercise restraint in their views concerning Eastern Poland. A sharp reaction was inevitable (they had received warnings from British censorship on this point as well), particularly as both the English and Soviet Press in Britain were, at the same time, freely expressing their views on this topic To quote an instance, after the Polish Press had been compulsorily silenced over the defence of their own country, Sir Stafford Cripps, the former Ambassador to Moscow and now Deputy Prime Minister, stated openly in an interview with the American Press that the Polish territories occupied by Russia in 1939-1940 should belong to that country, although some compromise concerning Poland would be desirable.* At the same time the *Scotsman* (March 11) was writing "it is no mystery that Russia is tending to finally incorporate the territories embraced by her frontiers of 1941."

During the first period of the Russo-German war, which proved so dangerous to the Soviets, when the hope of their survival had seemed remote, and the triumphant foe was calculating how many more weeks the Red Army would be able to hold out, Stalin had showed evidence of his good-will in all possible directions, and had been ready to arrive at a full understanding, even with the Poles. Since the final issue of the war on the Eastern front seemed then to be very dubious, Moscow's demands

* *Life*, March 7th, 1942

towards Poland were, in the Russian opinion at least, modest and more appertaining to prestige than to anything else. At that time Soviet statesmen held numerous interviews with their Polish ex-prisoners in an atmosphere of effusive cordiality, and seemed anxious to obtain information on a number of points. One issue to which the Russians stubbornly returned time and time again, was the question of the Ukraine. In spite of all the pressure of Russian propaganda, it had been clear to every peasant in the Soviet Ukraine that the Ukrainians in Poland were living under much better conditions, and, moreover, living on the soil which they personally owned—without the collective farm system and without the ever-present fear of deportation *

In their talks with the Poles, during that autumn of 1941, the Kremlin leaders hinted at their willingness to settle the Ukrainian problem in Poland by transferring the Ukrainians from Eastern Poland to the Soviet Union. The question of land meant nothing to the Soviets. They were then prepared to limit their territorial demands to some trifling proportion, a few districts perhaps. Eastern Poland was less than one-hundredth part of Russia and a few million Ukrainians and White Ruthenians had only a relative value as man-power It was, however, a solution which would finally liquidate the Ukrainian and White Ruthenian problem for the Kremlin, at any rate The Russians, therefore, proceeded to make cautious enquiries of the Poles and threw out hints (which in no way bound them) and to await the reaction. As none was forthcoming, they did not pursue the topic further.†

* Cardwell Su Ann, *Poland and Russia*, The last quarter of the century, New York, 1944.

The authoress lived for seventeen years in Poland and had visited Russia and the neighbouring countries extensively "During those seventeen years in Poland," she writes, "We (my husband and I) had extraordinary opportunities for getting acquainted with people of all classes. We knew pre-war Poland from east to west, and from north to south." The authoress continues.

"As for the Ukrainians in Poland being desirous of uniting with the Soviet Republic of the Ukraine, nothing appealed to them less. During the first ten years of my residence in Poland, that is between 1922—1933, fugitives from the Soviet Ukraine were continually attempting to cross the border into Poland. They tried to swim the Zbrucz in summer and to cross on the ice in winter. Red patrols watched that border and guards with machine guns stationed in hidden positions were on the alert Searchlight beams moved over the river and along the paths at night. Hundreds of luckless folk in flight from the Soviet side lost their lives in the attempt But a great many succeeded and the news they brought of life in the U.S S R, and their own miserable appearance was not of the sort to encourage longings among the Polish Ukrainians to live under the banner of the hammer and sickle." (Page 162).

† Editor, *The Nineteenth Century and After*, November, 1943.

«The chief reason why Russia has claimed the Polish province of Eastern Galicia, which was never Russian, even in Tsarist days, is that it harbours a Ukrainian population. Stalin will not tolerate the existence of a specific Ukrainian consciousness and, therefore, a Ukrainian population that is not under his control. If . . the future Russian-Polish border leaves at least a part of Eastern Galicia, including the city of Lwów, perhaps to Poland, Russia will certainly demand that the Ukrainian population be handed over by the Polish authorities for deportation into the Russian interior.

Such a compulsory exchange of population, or rather the expulsion of all Ukrainians and White Ruthenians, Polish citizens, whose ancestors had been bound up with the Polish Commonwealth and who had been living on their own soil for centuries, was beyond the scope of Polish loyalty. As citizens of Poland, these people, who enjoyed the same rights as the Poles, and in the Polish Parliament possessed a numerically strong representation comprised of M.P.s from all political parties, ranging from Nationalists to Radical Socialists, could not be 'handed over.'

The Ukrainians, particularly those in Eastern Galicia, were ardent nationalists—they desired to see an independent Ukraine. The Polish administration had perhaps blundered in her policy towards them, but the Polish authorities had never made any move to hamper their national and economic development. Within the confines of the U.S.S.R. the Ukrainians were dying as a nation, hence the fact that the Polish Ukrainians' fear of Russia was greater than their dislike for the Poles. In the event of having to choose between the two, it was quite certain that the greater percentage of the population of the whole of Eastern Poland or of a section of Eastern Poland (should part of that country be occupied by the Soviets) would go to the Polish Republic Neither the Ukrainians nor the White Ruthenians regarded themselves as Russians; on the contrary, they considered themselves very different from the latter They were both ethnically and culturally more akin to the Poles than to the Russians; this was due to a common age-long relationship, the numerous mixed marriages, the influence of Polish culture and social institutions modelled on Western patterns, and lastly—with regard to a large section of the White Ruthenians and Ukrainians—it was also due to the Catholic religion common to themselves and to the Poles

With the exception of a small number of Communists, there was in Poland no political group among the Ukrainians which would have tried to secure the support of Soviet Russia. During the Soviet occupation none of the Ukrainian political parties had claimed to be pro-Russian. As soon as the Germans re-occupied Eastern Galicia some Ukrainian elements went so far in demonstrating their attitude as to form several volunteer divisions to fight against the Soviet armies The Ukrainian Front of National Unity and the OUN (Ukrainian secret terrorist organisation) tried to get in touch with the Germans.

It may be said that before the outbreak of war, in spite of certain frictions and mutual grievances, the relations between the main body of Ukrainians and the Poles gradually improved and advanced towards a still closer understanding. In August, 1939, shortly before the outbreak of war, the largest and most important Ukrainian party, the Ukrainian National Democratic Union (UNDO), issued a declaration in which the Ukrainian population affirmed their allegiance to the Polish State and asserted that they would fulfil their duty as loyal citizens in the event

of a German invasion of Poland. The declaration issued on September 2, 1939, by M. Mudry, chairman of the Ukrainian Parliamentary Group in the Polish Seym, reflected the same spirit.

While talking with Sikorski in December, 1941, in Moscow, Stalin had assured him that his desire was to see a " strong and independent Poland." He was afterwards to repeat this assurance many times. It was a slogan which had been employed on other occasions, not only by the Bolsheviks themselves, but by their predecessors on the Tsarist throne. Alexander I had considered the restoration of an ' independent Poland ' under his sceptre. Each successive Russian Government was to repeat this same slogan at the time of every historical crisis. In August, 1914, Tsar Nicholas, through the medium of the Grand Duke Nicholas, the Russian C.-in-C., had issued a proclamation promising to unite the Polish people " under the sceptre of the Russian Emperor " in a restored Poland, " free in language, self-government and faith " " Russia believes," he continued, " that the sword has not rusted which at Grunwald struck down the Teutonic enemy."*

The Austrians and Prussians in 1916 had also pledged their word regarding a ' free Poland,' while in the following year, on March 8, 1917, the provisional Russian Government had renounced the Polish territories. The same story was to be repeated many times by the Red Government The slogan of a ' strong Poland ' had also been constantly proclaimed by Hitler practically from the moment of his ascension to power.† In 1941, Stalin expressed the same sentiment, in direct contradiction to his previous attitude in September, 1939, when Moscow had cried that . " Poland is finished for all time." For Hitler a ' strong Poland ' could be used only in one way, namely as a German dependency. Stalin by a ' strong Poland ' had meant in December, 1941, all its territories except for that portion which he might perhaps be able to bargain from her, but later on he was to consider this ' strong Poland ' merely in terms of her Western territories, since he no longer admitted that the Eastern section belonged to her. Thus, to the Kremlin, an ' independent Poland ' merely meant a country independent from ' Fascist or semi-Fascist Government'; from 'capitalists, lords, aristocrats and landowners,' just as the Republics of the Soviet Union were ' free.' This line of thought, so alien to the mind of the Westerner, was natural to the Soviet leaders, and to those people educated by them. On the basis of such reasoning Russia

* The Grunwald battle was fought near the lower Vistula, on the territory which, today, is East Prussia; here the power of the Teuton Knights had been smashed by united Polish and Lithuanian force in 1410.

† For instance, in Hitler's speech in Reichstag, May 21st, 1935, he had said: " We recognise, with the understanding and the heartfelt friendship of true nationalists, the Polish state as the home of a great, nationally-conscious nation " The same words were repeated on March 7th, 1936, January 30th, 1937, February 20th, 1938, September 7th, 1938 and January 30th, 1939.

developed the unceasing diplomatic and propaganda attack directed against Poland during this war.

The Polish citizens were the first item which appeared in the Soviet's plan to reannex the Eastern half of Poland. The Russian authorities stated that on the grounds of the ' elections ' which had been held in that area, these people were now Soviet citizens. As time went on the Soviet attitude towards this question underwent several changes. After the signing of the Polish-Soviet Agreement of July 30, 1941, and the issue of the ' amnesty ' Decree of August 12, in fact, throughout the ensuing months, the Soviets had recognised the status of all the Polish citizens then in Russia. At any rate, there had been no discrimination in nationality, creed or race when the Soviet authorities first began to release the Polish citizens from their various places of exile or imprisonment.

The first indication of the Soviet's intention came on December 1, 1941, when the Narkomindel handed a Note to the Polish Ambassador at Kuibyshev informing him that by the Decree of November 29, 1939 (based on the Soviet-German Treaty of ' amity and delineation ' of September 28, 1939), all those Poles domiciled in Eastern Poland annexed to the U.S.S.R. had acquired Soviet citizenship, but the Soviet Government would exclude from this Decree those former citizens of the Republic of Poland who, in its opinion, were of Polish nationality.

The Note continued :—

" The readiness of the Soviet Government to recognise as Polish citizens those persons of Polish nationality who, on November 1 - 2, 1939, were living on the above specified territory (i.e., Soviet-occupied Eastern Poland), only proves the good-will and lenience of the Soviet Government, but cannot serve in any case as a basis for an analogous recognition as Polish, citizens or persons of other nationalities, particularly those of Ukrainian, White Ruthenian and Jewish nationality, as the problem of boundaries between the U.S.S.R. and Poland is not settled yet and will be taken up in the future."

Thus, by this Note only the people of Polish blood could be conscripted to, or could voluntarily join the Polish Army, since the rest were now ' Soviet citizens.' Nothing was carried out in a straightforward manner, as was typical of Russia. Already in the October, the Governor of the military district of Kazakstan had decided on ' his own account ' that only Poles could be conscripted to the Polish Army, and had issued the order that " all Jews, Ukrainians and White Ruthenians must join the Red Army." The Polish Ambassador sent a protest to the Narkomindel and received in answer the Note of December 1, which confirmed the position as it stood. On December 9, the Polish Embassy protested once again. The attitude of Poland was clear throughout on this matter and had not undergone any modification. All persons who had been Polish citizens in September, 1939, retained this status wherever they were and regardless of their race, nationality, origin or creed. It was immaterial to Poland whether the individual was Pole or Ruthenian, White Ruthenian or Jew, or of Roman Catholic, Protestant, Jewish or Eastern Orthodox faith, but

what did matter was that he was a Polish citizen. The Embassy reaffirmed this fact in the Note to the Narkomindel in the following terms :—

" . . . Polish legislation is based on the principle of equality before the law of all citizens, irrespective of their nationality or race. Any enactment of Soviet law introducing or sanctioning discrimination or differentiation in this respect, if such there were, are unknown to the Polish Embassy . . ."

" The fact of a given person possessing Polish citizenship is determined by Polish law and in particular the law of January 20, 1920, concerning the citizenship of the Polish State."

The Narkomindel declined to acknowledge this protest. According to the Russians therefore, the matter was settled, but this was not the case as far as the Poles were concerned All Polish citizens of non-Polish blood had now been claimed by the Kremlin As a result, whenever the Embassy intervened with the Commissariat for Foreign Affairs on behalf of Jews, or whenever they wished to appoint Ruthenians, White Ruthenians or Jews as local representatives, the Soviet authorities in most cases refused to discuss the subject and stated that the persons in question " were Soviet citizens." They also, as a rule, declined to grant permits to any such persons, even if they possessed visas for foreign countries, United Kingdom, the United States, Palestine or India, for instance.

On June 9, the Narkomindel sent a Note to the Polish Ambassador concerning the "determination of Polish citizenship." The Soviet authorities, it appeared, intended to scrutinise the lists submitted by the Polish Embassy and only those to whom they (the Soviets) raised no objection were to be granted Polish passports, and would be recognised by the Russian Government as ' Polish citizens.' Race, origin, creed, or any non-Polish sounding name had a great bearing on whether or not the individual received such acknowledgement. The Soviets paid no attention to the protests of the Polish Government over this matter.

Stalin had thrown out hints regarding a change in the Polish-Russian frontier while Sikorski had been in Moscow at the beginning of December, 1941. Sikorski's only reply had been, " the world would scorn me if I left Moscow having agreed to any commitments regarding a change in the frontier."*

This may have been the moment when the conviction became firmly fixed in Stalin's mind that further discussions with the Polish Government on this subject would be useless. They had parted, each still adhering to his own opinion. Each presuming that a final settlement would be reached at the end of the war If Russia proved victorious, then she would certainly annex any territory she could possibly get and dispute any agreements previously concluded, or any vows made to the Poles and to the Allies.

In January, 1942, the Soviet Government began more openly to lay their claims to Eastern Poland. The situation on the front had eased and

* Stronski, S., *ibid*

the Germans had been arrested in their drive before Moscow. On January 5, Narkomindel informed the Polish Government that there had been no aggression of Poland by the Soviets; there had been no occupation of Poland by the Russian Army, and that the incorporation of these territories into the Soviet Union was a result of the 'free-will of the population.'

In Molotov's Note on German atrocities of January 6, 1942, the cities of Lwów and Wilno were shown among the list of Soviet towns. A Note sent by the Polish Ambassador on January 9, in which he pointed out that these cities belonged to the Polish Republic, brought a reply on January 17, to the effect that the

"Commissariat for Foreign Affairs considers as unjustified the statement of the Embassy . . . in which the cities of Lwów, Brzesc, Stanislavov, etc., on the territories of the Soviet Ukrainian Republic and Soviet White Ruthenian Republic, belonging to the Soviet Union, are referred to as cities on the territories of the Polish Republic. Since it is irrelevant to open a discussion on the historical and legal foundations by which Lwów and any other city on the territories of the Ukrainian and White Ruthenian Soviet Republics belong to the Soviet Union—the Commissar of Foreign Affairs considers it his duty to inform the Embassy that, in future, he will not take into consideration any Note of the Embassy containing similar affirmations."

Stalin, in his Order of the Day to the Red Army on February 23, 1942, referred to the Red banner which was "soon to wave over Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania," while Molotov, in his Note of April 27, again referred to the Polish city of Pinsk as a Russian town. It was obvious that the Soviets intended to regard Eastern Poland as part of the Soviet Union, and tried to force the Polish Government into an acknowledgement of this fact. Simultaneously, by means of misrepresentation, they endeavoured to sway public opinion in Britain and the U.S.A. in their favour, and to gain the consent of these Powers to this incorporation into the U.S.S.R.

Though such an attitude on the part of one Ally towards another, fighting the same foe, seemed inexplicable, it was nevertheless in complete accordance with the principles of the Soviet imperialists, who never for one moment forgot that their participation in the Coalition was purely accidental. During the period of a lengthy war, the strangest of alliances may be brought about, but it does not necessarily follow that the participating Powers would have common aims in the post-war period Moscow saw beyond the war and, as always, thinking in terms of new conquests and annexations, she had a definite programme in view. The other Powers, having no such thoughts of far-reaching aims, operated in a much smaller dimension—that of their own terrain. They were mainly concerned with anticipating the change-over from a war-time alliance to peace-time collaboration and the slogan of 'never again' was meanwhile being widely proclaimed throughout England. But for Soviet Russia the role of United Nations was limited, it seemed, not only to the war

period, but even during that period. From the first moment when Russia realised that a victory of the United Nations would be improbable without her, she began the policy of increasing her demands In the first stages, these demands were paid on account by the weaker members of the Allied camp and by the supplies of material from its richer partners. In the case of Poland, this policy of the Kremlin was made easier by the fact that it had a first-class instrument to wield, namely, those numerous Polish hostages. Later, when Russia finally decided not to let these people go, the Kremlin had found other means of exerting pressure on the Polish Government using the medium of the other Allies for this purpose.

Molotov arrived in London, in May, 1942, amid the greatest secrecy, to negotiate with the British Government. One of the main points of these negotiations was that Great Britain should recognise Russia's annexation of half Poland and the Baltic States, that is, to recognise the partition accomplished by the Soviets with the connivance of Germany Since this demand was put at a time when the position held by the Russians on their front-line was still not enviable, it was reckoned, in the opinion of the Kremlin, as the maximum they could demand at that time. With success at the front, this demand was to be gradually increased.

A year earlier, when Germany had been standing at the climax of her strength, the same Molotov had asked in Berlin that Russia should share in the partition of Europe, and be given the Turkish Straits and Northern Norway—the outlet to the Mediterranean with its direct threat to the Suez Canal, and an outlet to the North Atlantic. Thus by two widely outstretched arms, to embrace all Europe.

In London the demands which Molotov presented to the British Government were, for the time being, more modest. A Note and map explained how Russia had interpreted the Atlantic Charter and paragraph 5 of the British-Soviet Treaty, concerning the " renouncement of territorial claims " and the " non-interference in the affairs of other States," to which she had put her signature. These claims in the beginning of 1942, as the well-informed *Times* wrote on March 7, " . . . nowhere go beyond the territories embodied in the Soviet Union when Hitler marched against it." Therefore, nowhere beyond half Poland, Lithuania, Estonia, Latvia, part of Finland, Bessarabia and Bukovina. The opinion of the British Cabinet was not unanimous on this interpretation. *The Times*, explaining the Russian point of view, pointed out that, as to the Atlantic Charter, the Soviet demand was " in no way incompatible with the security of Europe, which the framework of the Atlantic Charter thought to insure."

The Russians asked that the British consent to their demands should be inserted in the Treaty. It is surmised that only the intervention of Winant, the American Ambassador, " who convinced Molotov that publishing them would have a catastrophical effect on American opinion "

caused the Russian territorial claims to be dropped. "Although Eden declared that Britain will not conclude any secret agreements, it could be admitted that Molotov returned to Moscow without having any doubts concerning Britain's position regarding the Polish frontier. The Poles were not informed on this point."*

Having signed the Treaty with Britain, Molotov rushed post-haste to Washington, but there he met with a clear-cut refusal. The U.S. Government was very far from giving consent to any changes of frontiers in Europe, especially where it concerned Poland. The six million people, that group of Americans of Polish descent, headed a vigorous action in order to defend the rights of their Motherland. And in this they could reckon on the support of the majority of the American public. Nevertheless, in the opinion of the U.S. Government, the stability of the Polish-Russian frontier was shaken after the Treaty of July 30, 1941, and none other than Sikorski was to state this fact in March, 1942, after his visit to Roosevelt, when, in reply to the journalists, he answered that the " question of the Polish frontiers will be settled by the correlation of forces after the war," and that " the Atlantic Charter, which remains the chief source of the moral strength of the allied cause, may either be accepted as a whole or rejected as a whole."†

The summer of 1942 marked a period of growing impatience in the Kremlin's attitude towards the Polish problem. The Russians had not up to then gained much in the diplomatic arena. The Soviets still needed the Allies more than they needed the Soviets. Although Britain had not recognised their claims to the Baltic States, she had tacitly made a concession by ignoring that point. The legations of these States did not appear that year in the diplomatic list of His Majesty's Government. The situation on the Eastern front was presenting an even more gloomy picture at that time. The Germans were driving on to the Volga and the Caucasus, but the Kremlin had no doubts now that the crisis of the Soviet rule was over. And it was only a question of time to exhaust this German ' drive ' and overcome the crisis on the front.

This conviction found ready expression in the change in the Russian attitude regarding the whole frontier zone on the West, which Moscow had then occupied for nearly two years. The first step was to restore the ' Ribbentrop-Molotov Line ' with the assistance, or merely by the tacit consent, of the Allies It should be recalled that Russia in any coalition in war-time has always been careful to anticipate the expected defeat of the enemy and to obtain a guarantee from her Allies regarding future territorial gains. A classic example of this was the secret agreement of 1915, in which the Entente agreed that the Turkish Straits would be part of the post-war Russian booty, and even thoroughly defined the

* *New York Times*, March 7th, 1943 and December 18th, 1944.

† *The Times*, April 17th, 1942.

frontiers. Similarly, in the beginning of 1942, the Kremlin began to use these familiar methods and throw out feelers in this direction, but, since Russia's shares were then indeed very low, Stalin could not expect to meet with any appreciable success. The Kremlin, however, was quick to realise, and this conviction was rapidly strengthened, that any action against the members of the Middle Zone, even against the Poles, who held an exceptional moral position in the Allied camp and beyond, would not affect Russia's relations with the United Nations. Moscow now began to act on its own account. Stalin abruptly dispelled the mirage of a Polish Army in the U.S S.R., and decided to hold on to the Poles as hostages. Ambassador Kot was compelled to quit the Soviet Union ; there was nothing more for him to do. All the hopes with which he had arrived in that country lay in ruins

The Soviet Government, occupied with the battle, put aside the Polish problem for the time being and only in the winter, when the Germans were firmly checked 120 kilometres before Moscow and the battle of Stalingrad had been won (the first great success, and the turning point of the war on the Eastern front), did the Kremlin start a new phase in its offensive against the Western world and its first bastion—Poland Most important of all the achievements of Moscow's diplomacy at that time was the blow aimed at the future Polish-Czech Federation.

Polish opinion was unanimously of the conviction that, had Poland been united with Czecho-Slovakia, the history of the Second Great War would have followed a different path. Before the war, the main obstacle against such a union had been the enmity between the two countries. It was an enmity, in fact, which did not have a very solid foundation, the sole cause being in the rivalry over a small portion of land—Teshen Silesia, a few hundred square miles.

Prior to the Great War, this district was part of the Habsburg Empire, and, according to the last census taken by the Austrians in 1910, was inhabited by 69 3 per cent Poles, 18 2 per cent Czechs and 12.4 per cent Germans. Under the Agreement of 1918, effected on the spot by the local Czech and Polish National Committees, Teshen Silesia had become part of Polish territory ; an arrangement which was further strengthened by an agreement between the Governments of both countries. When, however, Poland in 1919 was threatened by the Bolsheviks, the Czechs, disregarding this Agreement, had invaded and occupied Teshen. Lengthy discussions ensued, and finally the Council of Ambassadors in Paris decided (this was during the critical days of the Red invasion of Poland) on a frontier which left most of Teshen Silesia to Czecho-Slovakia. This award amounted to sixty-nine boroughs and villages containing a Polish population of 90 per cent, while Poland was not given one borough or village with a Czech majority. Poland was in a most precarious position at that time—the Soviet troops were approaching Warsaw and, therefore, she could do nothing.

In September, 1938, when Czecho-Slovakia was subjected to a powerful German pressure, the Polish Government let it be known that it was expecting the problem of Teshen to be settled in the same way as the other minority problems in Czecho-Slovakia. Dr. Benes sent a letter to the

President of Poland expressing his hope that friendly relations between the two countries would be re-established on the basis of frontier rectifications. The Czecho-Slovak Government however, endeavoured to postpone the settlement to a future date. Two days after the Munich Pact had been signed, the Polish Government sent an ultimatum to Prague and Teshen Silesia was ceded to Poland.

The majority of the Polish people had been decidedly opposed to the policy of the Polish Government in 1938, regarding the solution of the Teshen district, but this must not be taken to mean that they regarded it as just, that the whole of this district should belong to Czecho-Slovakia. The conviction in Poland was that this frontier problem should be finally settled according to the wishes of the population concerned.

By the Spring of 1939, however, Czecho-Slovakia had collapsed and Poland was defeated in the autumn of the same year, and it would seem that a most propitious moment had arrived for these two countries to reach an understanding. In 1940, the Czecho-Slovak National Committee, with the help of the Polish Government, was able to change its status to a Provisional Government and to gain the recognition of France and Great Britain In the first years of the war, while Russia had been collaborating with Germany, Dr. Benes fully recognised and heralded the idea of a Federation of Central Europe, particularly as this federation was patronised by Britain. As the result of parleys with the Poles, a plan for such a Union was sketched, and the Polish Government and the Provisional Czecho-Slovak Government decided that, after the war, both countries would form a 'Confederation of States.' During this period the Commissar of Foreign Affairs of the U.S.S.R., Molotov, had been in the act of visiting Berlin.

The joint Polish-Czecho-Slovak Declaration of November 11, 1940, was as follows :—

"The two Governments consider it imperative to declare solemnly that Poland and Czecho-Slovakia, closing once and for all the period of past recriminations and disputes, and taking into consideration the community of their fundamental interests, are determined, on the conclusion of this war, to enter as independent and sovereign states into a closer political and economic association which would become the basis of a new order in Central Europe and a guarantee of its stability. Moreover, both Governments express the hope that in this co-operation, based on respect for the freedom of nations, the principles of democracy and the dignity of man, they will also be joined by other countries in that part of the European continent. The two Governments are already resolved to co-operate closely now for the defence of their common interests and for the preparation of the future association of the two countries."

The terms of the Polish-Czecho-Slovak Agreement were signed on January 24, 1942. When the Soviets entered the war, however, the Kremlin immediately began to exert pressure on Dr. Benes' Government and in October, 1942, Dr. Benes renounced even the idea of such a 'Confederation of States.' Thus the Polish plan to form a Central Union of all those countries between the Baltic and the Aegean Sea, received a strong blow. As a substitute for this, Russia began to develop her idea

of attaining a series of 'independent' dis-united small States before her Western frontier, each with a 'friendly' government under her jurisdiction Emphasising a 'union' within the frontiers of the U.S.S.R, Moscow propaganda, from the beginning of 1942, strongly opposed every attempt at the creation of any other 'union' West of Russia.

During his stay in the Soviet Union, the Polish Ambassador had "felt himself to be rather the head of a rescue expedition than an Ambassador who should have been occupied only with political affairs." The Polish exiles were dying by the thousand, and then there was the task of extracting those who were still in the dungeons, feeding those who flocked to the protection of the Polish Authorities (among them many children) and of saving those who were still in their places of exile.

Delegates from the Polish Embassy were appointed in nineteen towns, in those provinces where the largest groups of Polish deportees had been located These delegates had to carry out their work in areas sometimes greater than any of the European States. Groups of Polish citizens in different localities chose representatives from their number who acted as liaison officers between those citizens and the delegates. By January 1, 1942, there were 342 representatives in all, and the Narkomindel approved the instructions issued to these men by the Embassy; the local authorities did not at first hamper these people in their work. Relief was given to any Polish citizen, irrespective of nationality or faith.* But the Soviet authorities in some places did not wish to recognise the non-Poles as Polish citizens and a certain amount of friction occurred.

During 1941-1942, relief was given to over 265,400 persons. In European Russia (46,817), in Siberia (71,444), in Kazachstan (56,991) and Central Asia (90,249) Among this number were 77,264 children of under ten years of age and, of these, 8,605 were orphans, who were located mainly in the South of the Soviet Union where the majority of families had been separated The relief given by the Polish Government was in the form of food and clothing, which had come from Britain and America, and money, which in itself was of little value — in Kazakstan, for example, one pound of bread cost thirty-five roubles, in the Altay province sixty, and in the Komi Republic one hundred and fifty roubles.

One of the first questions put to the Polish Ambassador by the Russian authorities was, "how and when were the Polish Government going to pay for the supplies to the troops and to its citizens," since it was res-

* Among the number who received the help of the Polish Embassy, fifty per cent were Poles and the rest Ukrainians, White Ruthenians and Jews. It seemed the latter more easily adapted themselves to life in the Soviet Union and, staying on the fringe of the big towns had benefited from this assistance to a far greater percentage For every hundred persons given relief by the Embassy, 39 were Jews—although these had hardly amounted to 25 per cent. of the deportees. The Polish Authorities differentiated between Poles and Jews for statistical reasons only.

ponsible for their welfare. As the Polish Government was not able to produce enough stocks of food or pay ' cash down ' immediately for any supplies, Commissar Vyshinsky declared that " the war needs of the Soviet Union made any loan to the Poles out of question." He put forward the suggestion that the Poles should appeal to Britain and America for the money " from social sources." Finally, after Sikorski's visit to Moscow, the Soviet Government on December 31, 1941, granted the Polish Government a loan of one hundred million roubles, repayable at the gold dollar rate, i.e., forty million dollars, and equivalent to four million dollars in its real value in Russia at the time. Thus, from the first, every pound of bread for those Polish citizens who had been forcibly brought to Russia, whose property had been confiscated by the Soviet authorities, was reckoned in terms of money and as Poland's debt.

Relief was distributed through the intermediary of the Embassy's delegates and the local representatives ; great difficulties had to be faced, however, before the goods could reach their destination. In some cases, by no means isolated ones, railway trucks loaded with relief parcels travelled for three months before they arrived at the office of a delegate or local representative. But here the difficulty did not end. In the remoter regions, local representatives had to hire all kinds of the most primitive type of transport such as donkeys, oxen, camels, to get the goods from the railway station to the place of distribution. Goods had often to be taken across thousands of miles of frozen river, waste land and steppes. The following letter from a local representative in Siberia gives some illustration of these obstacles :—

" . . . I must explain that the enormous distances, the primitive tracks across the tayga, the absence of transport, the irregular flow of supplies . . . hamper the work of the local representative and force him to cover distances of 100 miles at a time by foot and without food.

" When transporting a load of relief goods in a river barge recently, the temperature suddenly fell and we found ourselves surrounded by drifting ice. This grew so thick that very soon we were unable to proceed—there were six of us—we found ourselves imprisoned for three days and two nights in the middle of the river with the temperature at 40 degrees F. below zero. Prisoners from a local camp finally succeeded in rescuing us and by a miracle we managed to sail to the nearest town. We then decided to take no more risks and to transport the goods, little by little, in horse carts. These are the conditions under which we work in this district . . ."

As a result of lengthy negotiations, the Narkomindel finally agreed, on December 23, 1941, to the establishment of Polish orphanages and kindergartens, and on February 12, 1942, to grant these institutions special food quotas. The task of organising these establishments was not, however, an easy one . the local authorities were often far from helpful and sometimes lacked the necessary supplies for the food quotas ; moreover, it was no easy matter to find suitable premises.

On March 1, 1943, there were 807 relief institutions of all types—83 orphanages, 286 kindergartens and schools (43 per cent Jewish children),

hostels, feeding centres, hospitals, convalescent homes, homes for disabled, etc., for the use of 31,463 Polish citizens, including 15,305 Jews. Total expenditure between August 1, 1941, up to March 1, 1943, was one hundred and eleven million roubles.

The relief organisation created by the Polish Embassy was not, however, allowed to work very smoothly for long. The first and main cause lay in the governmental system of the Soviet Union, where there was no space for any independent organisation, particularly one of a foreign origin. Any foreigner moving at liberty throughout Russia was an active spy to the Soviets, and each foreigner in a labour camp or prison a potential one. For twenty years, the Soviet bureaucratic machine had been saturated with this mania of espionage and sabotage, and any accident or deficiency in output was at once attributed either to mysterious enemy forces, governed from abroad, or else to counter-revolutionary activity within the country. The powerful apparatus of the N.K.V.D., which held the population in a grip of iron, regarded the Polish activities with suspicion from the start, and as the Soviet Government began to change its policy towards the Polish problem, so the pressure of the N K V.D. against the Poles increased Soon the Soviets found that these national organisations were clashing with the existing Russian regime. By March, the local authorities had already begun to refuse the delegates information regarding those deportees and prisoners who had not yet been released, pointing out that this was a matter for the Polish Embassy to pursue through the medium of the Narkomindel The Embassy, however, was only able to receive news of these people through those same delegates and representatives who were connected with the centres for the deportees, and could appeal to the Soviet Foreign Office only on the grounds of this information. In the first eight months the Embassy had intervened for thousands of its citizens, but the Narkomindel had ignored the appeals in the majority of cases, replying that the prisoners in question were either ' already free,' or ' could not be traced,' or else stated the people concerned were not Polish citizens. As early as March and April, 1942, the Soviet authorities demanded that the Embassy should not intervene on behalf of Polish citizens of Jewish, Ukrainian and White Ruthenian nationality.

In May, 1942, some of the delegates were accused by the N.K V.D. of conducting espionage on behalf of Great Britain and several of them had to leave the U.S.S.R.* Towards the end of June, 1942, the Soviets proceeded to arrest the Embassy's delegates (though some of them possessed diplomatic status) and a certain number of the more important members among the local representatives—170 persons in all. These men were arrested either in the streets or at night in their homes. By July 20, not

* Dallin, D. J., *Russia and Post-war Europe*, New Haven, 1943 . . . a unique occasion in history, when one war ally accused another of widespread espionage in favour of a third ally. (P. 202.)

one delegate remained free, and the Soviet Government declared that they now no longer agreed to the continuance of a relief organisation based on a network of delegates. At the protest of the Polish Government, most of the arrested delegates and the local representatives were set free (at the end of October they were made to leave the U.S.S.R.), with the exception of some sixteen persons, who " could not be traced."

The Polish Embassy was permitted to continue its work of relief, only on a very reduced scale and only for such Poles as were situated near the camps of the Polish Army, mainly the families of the soldiers. When in January, 1943, the Narkomindel finally claimed every Pole in Russia as a Soviet citizen, the remaining exiles had to be left to their fate.

The second batch of Polish troops left Russia in August, 1942, and with them the second and last group of civilians The Soviet Government did not wish to release any more The scene of this final evacuation was tragic in the extreme. When the news spread that the last section of the Polish Army was leaving Russia, thousands of Polish people from the surrounding districts flocked to the docks and station, hoping that they might be able to go with them. But the Soviet authorities would not allow one more person above the prescribed quota to leave their country. The railway trucks were closely controlled and guarded by N.K.V.D troops and the unhappy people were threatened and driven away Just before the last train was due to leave, General Zhukov of the Security troops of the N.K.V.D. came himself to personally verify that the trucks contained no one who was not on the prescribed list. A similar scene was repeated at the port of Krasnovodsk, where the troops and civilians had been embarked ready to ship for Iran.*

The Polish Government, time and time again, tried to extract a few more of its citizens from the U.S.S.R., but invariably encountered a stubborn refusal. They did their utmost to rescue at least as many children as possible, but the result was not encouraging. In September, 1942, five hundred children were evacuated to India. On June 2, 1942, the Polish Ambassador spoke with Vyshinsky regarding a general evacuation of all the Polish children. Vyshinsky's attitude, however, was unfavourable and he emphasised the difficulties of transportation. On July 8, the Polish Embassy received a letter from the Narkomindel stating that the question was under consideration. In September came the answer that the Soviet Government agreed to the evacuation of some

* An extract from the memoirs of M. Jankowski .

As the embarkation was being completed, a boy of sixteen or seventeen years of age came running to the pier and begged the Russian guards to allow him to join the ship, but they pushed him away. The desperate boy tried to scale one of the gunnel ropes still attached to the ship, but the guards of the N.K.V.D began to shake it violently. The hands of the exhausted boy were too weak to hold him . . . and he dropped with a crash on to the pier and broke his skull The guards casually kicked the body in the water. Those on the ship and the thousands who had been left despairingly on the shore looked on this pitiful scene with stunned helplessness

numbers of Polish children. The actual number was not defined, but it was made clear that it was only to be the children of Polish blood. On November 3, 1942, Ambassador Romer once more referred to the evacuation; Molotov did not give a refusal, but emphasised that it must be speeded up. Romer proposed that 19,000 children should leave Russia, but Vyshinksy protested, stating that only the six hundred who were already in Aschabad on the Caspian sea could go. Any further discussion on this problem brought the same negative results.

On the Polish side, the events of the summer and autumn of 1942 in Russia were to have an ever deepening echo. There had been the greatest disappointment regarding the fate of the exiles. Many of the soldiers of the newly-formed Polish Army had been forced to leave their families on Soviet soil, and the knowledge that they would now be lost forever, together with millions of their fellow-countrymen, caused the greatest distress, and augmented the general sense of depression. Sikorski, adhering to the principle ' of maintaining the unity of the Allies,' and hoping not to increase the friction, continued to minimise the strength of the Soviet's blows against the cause of Poland. The Polish Press in Britain and America, however, no longer concealed the seriousness of the situation. It had already clamoured for the recall of Ambassador Kot, and when he left Russia the Press queried whether, under the existing circumstances another Ambassador should be sent before the matter had been cleared up, or at least until the Soviets had given a guarantee with régard to the remaining deportees. Since, as the Polish Press pointed out, it seemed beyond the capabilities of the Polish Government to improve the position, it became necessary to arouse the opinion of Britain and America and bring the whole affair into the right perspective, particularly as Soviet propaganda was representing Poland to be the country causing a rift in the ' United Front of the Allies.'

In spite of the prevailing circumstances, Sikorski sent another Ambassador, Tadeusz Romer. He was a stout champion of Sikorski's policy of maintaining relations with Russia at any price. Romer brought Stalin a letter from Sikorski, in which the latter once more appealed for goodwill and reminded him of the Declaration of Friendship of 1941.

Romer's position in the Soviet Union was not an enviable one. Anxious to maintain the welfare organisation, he submitted a proposal for the creation of Polish-Russian control commissions as the link between the Embassy and persons of trust among the exiles, to re-place the previously existing delegates. In December, the Soviet Government declared at first that it was prepared to accept this proposal, but finally the Narkomindel stated that the relief could be achieved only by " the Polish Government paying cash into the Soviet treasury to help the Soviet citizens of Polish origin; the Soviet Government would dispose of this money and render an account."

BITTERNESS OF DISAPPOINTMENT

We may boldly affirm that the title of the Empress to her portion of Poland is not the work of a moment or of chance, but the creation of thirty years of labour, cares and colossal effort of every kind.

(Osterman, the Chancellor of Catherine the Second to the King of Prussia, 1772).

On January 16, 1943, the day after his arrival from America, Sikorski addressed the ten thousand Polish soldiers stationed in Scotland. Speaking of the results of his visit, he assured them that " all problems concerning us are favourably settled " Yet on the same day the Narkomindel handed a Note to the Polish Ambassador at Kuibyshev and in that Note, the Soviets declared that the ' exemption ' granted by the Soviet Government in favour of deportees of Polish nationality from Eastern Poland would be withdrawn. This meant that from January 16, 1943, everyone from that section of Poland would automatically become a Russian subject. Thus, one year and a half after the conclusion of the Pact with the Polish Republic, the Soviet Government discovered a new interpretation quite alien to the letter and spirit of that Pact. In the Note, the Narkomindel stated that " the Polish Government, in spite of the goodwill shown by the Soviet Government, has adopted a negative attitude to this Agreement by putting forward claims to Eastern Poland, claims which conflicted with the Soviet's sovereign rights."

Poland had no object in claiming these provinces, for they had always been part of her country. Through the medium of this Note the Soviets were simply declaring that they were about to re-annex Eastern Poland. Thus Moscow virtually nullified the Polish-Russian Treaty of July, 1941.

It was a complete collapse of the policy of appeasement hitherto employed by Sikorski. Up till that time it had been justified by his endeavour to rescue the Poles exiled in Russia, but this Note was calculated to destroy even that argument. The Polish Government had been deprived of its citizens, the Kremlin had usurped these people for itself. The Narkomindel underlined the point that the Polish-Russian Treaty of July, 1941, contained no paragraph which cancelled the results of the ' election ' already carried out in Eastern Poland, and, moreover, that the term ' amnesty ' used in the Treaty was " proof of the Polish Government's recognition of the Soviet's sovereign rights to this country, since no Government can bestow amnesty to the citizens of another Power."

The possibility of rescuing the Polish citizens in Russia and saving them from starvation had now practically disappeared. The Narkomindel, explained this Note a few days later by saying that, since the number of Polish citizens in Russia was " insignificant, any relief organisation for them was useless," and that the families of the soldiers who had

left that country were now Soviet subjects. Nearly all the welfare representatives of the Polish Embassy were deprived of their Polish citizenship at the same time. Relief transportation of goods from abroad had to be given up. The Poles—these new Soviet citizens—" would have to work in the frame of the Soviet system."

Many Poles who had been enroute for the relief centres were made to leave the trains at the first station and report to the N.K.V.D. authorities who forbade them to quit the locality. Identity papers and certificates were taken from all Polish citizens in Russia, and, in short, they once more found themselves interned.

On January 15, the day before the Soviet Government sent its Note, the Council of the People's Commissars of the U.S.S.R. passed a decree whereby all the relief institutions of the Embassy were to be taken under Soviet management and administration. This was to affect all orphanages, homes for the disabled, kindergartens, hospitals, medical posts, etc., all of which were beyond any dispute the property of the Polish Government. It is noteworthy to observe, moreover, that the Soviet Government never officially informed the Polish Embassy of their decision before taking over these institutions.

This action was not at first universal, but began gradually and in different regions. It actually started in February, 1943, and the first institutions to be taken over were in the Kuibyshev area, not far from the seat of the Embassy, while it was not until the end of March that action on a larger scale was launched, when all the 807 establishments were either brought under Soviet administration or abolished. This was accomplished by special commissions consisting of representatives of the N.K.V.D. and the local education and administrative authorities. Persons who accepted Soviet citizenship, and children under sixteen whom the Soviet authorities considered as Soviet citizens by virtue of the law itself, were allowed to remain in these establishments. The Soviet authorities then proceeded to appoint new superintendents of the institutions, which they re-organised so as to eliminate what they considered to be superfluous occupations (the teaching of religion, prayers, etc.) and to introduce instead Russian school books, songs, etc.

The dissolving and closing of these 807 relief organisations meant that all the stores obtained through 'Lend-Lease' sources were confiscated by the Soviet authorities and thousands of people were left without any means of existence.

The shock was great, and the Polish Government could not minimise the impression which the Note had made on their people, particularly on the Polish Forces abroad and within Poland itself. The soldiers of the Middle East Army (eighty per cent were from Eastern Poland) had passed through the labour camps of Russia The Commanders of both the forces in the Middle East, and of those in Britain, furnished a report to their London Headquarters of the ferment which the situation had

created among the ranks. General Anders, the Commander of the Polish Army in the Middle East, considered the situation to be so serious that, on February 9, 1943, he issued an order of the day to his Army on this subject, an order which can be quoted as an expression of the general opinion.

" Several days ago the Soviet Government sent a Note to our Government in which, by a one-sided decision and for reasons absolutely incomprehensible, all citizens of the Polish Republic who were under the Soviet occupation in November, 1939, have been termed as ' citizens of Russia.'

"We understand too well what this means!—we know what the fate will be of our countrymen, our parents, our wives and our children still remaining in the territory of the U.S.S R.

" It is unquestionably a hostile act against Poland, and all Poles everywhere can only understand it in such a way Because of this, I immediately dispatched a request to the C.-in-C. asking him to inform us of the decision of the Polish Government To-day I received an explanation that the Polish Government have refused to accept the Soviet's Note and have referred it to the British and U S A. Governments. Meanwhile our operational Commander, General Wilson, has informed me that he, on his part, has applied to his chief, emphasising the necessity for immediate intervention.

" I am convinced that, with the assistance of our British friends, with whom we have been united in life and death in this fight for freedom, since September, 1939, and by the intervention of the U.S.A., the matter will be favourably settled.

" Justice and law are on our side. We all, without exception, whether in Poland or abroad, know that war with Germany is our first aim. No one more than Poland desires to be on friendly terms with the U S S.R. We, as a State and as a Nation, have done them no wrong. But there is not one Pole existing who would agree that Poland, after so much loss of life, which she is still sustaining without ceasing, and must still sustain, should lose one jot of her territory.

" We shall remain silent as long as it is necessary for our cause. We are a coherent unit, which has passed through the heaviest hardships of life, and so, now, in this phase of the struggle for the Polish Republic, we shall be able to act as the cause of Poland will require."

Sikorski took a firm stand in order to prevent the spreading of discontent in the Army. He dismissed the Commander of the Polish Forces in Britain, General Spiechowicz (a former Commander of the 5th Division formed in the U.S.S.R.), and managed to appease the Commander of the Middle East Army by advising him to " wait and see " : but he was by no means successful in appeasing public opinion. The Polish Press in Britain and America demanded in unison that, after a reverse such as this, a reverse which had indicated how greatly the Government had lacked in foresight in its eagerness to appease Russia, it must resign.

" The chief accusation against this Government was that it had not kept its own citizens informed or told the free world the true facts regarding Soviet demands," wrote *Mysl Polska* ('Polish Thought,' the organ of the National Democrats in London). " To-day, however, it is universally known that the Soviet Union has definitely and bluntly declared that it finally considered the Polish land, occupied in 1939, as Soviet territory

and its inhabitants as Soviet citizens . . . It means, therefore, nothing less than that these people will be wedged within the framework of the Soviet system and in all probability exterminated.

" The silence which until now has been maintained on this subject by the Government could only be explained by the existence of those unfortunate people, women and children, still in Russia, who have been driven to the remote Asiatic regions, chiefly to the polar regions . . . To-day, that reason is valueless. We can no longer help our brothers and sisters by maintaining silence. The policy existing until now of hiding our wrongs from the eyes of the world can no longer be effective, instead it can only harm our cause.

" The silence of the Government can be explained but cannot be justified. The voices of those who are coming here to Britain from Soviet exile bear witness that our people left in Russia have, without hesitation, rejected the idea of bargaining a part of the Polish soil in exchange for their lives or even for material help.

" . . . To-day, the official Press writes that the Treaty of July ' is appraised as one of the greatest Polish contributions to this war ' Where is the proof of this ? Does the proof lie in the fact that to-day our right to half our territory is being questioned by one of our military allies and that our other allies remain silent ? Does the proof lie with the tragic fate of a great section of our population still imprisoned in the Soviet Union ?

"And what of our contribution to the war in 1939 · forty divisions of our best soldiers, our entire national capital, all our State and civil assets, the blood of our dead and murdered people ?

" We were the first combatants of this war, just as Belgium was in the last war, but while the restoration of Belgium was the first item in the war aims of the Entente, our policy has permitted such a state of affairs to arise that our existence as a nation, for which we have risked our all against the foe, is now threatened within the confines of our own camp.

" For one and a half years our Premier has continuously assured us that Stalin desired to see a ' great and strong Poland.' If this is not so, if the Soviet Premier is conducting a different policy, why is the world opinion being convinced otherwise ? And if so, for whose benefit ?

" The Polish-Russian problem ought not to be kept secret. The world should not be lulled into thinking that such a problem does not exist, or that Poland does not consider it to be important.

"As far as Poland is concerned, the only frontier she recognises is the frontier of the Riga Treaty. The war we are fighting is with the aim that treaties, at least, are made to be kept.

" The best means of informing the world of what has transpired and of the situation as it stands, and to define Polish policy, is to change the present Government No declaration, no ' irresponsible decision,' can have any value.

" The present Government can help the Polish policy only in one way—by resigning."

In 1942, the Soviet demands presented in London and Washington in connection with the Polish territories had met with a refusal Now, however, in the beginning of 1943, when the Russian winter offensive had already begun to give good results the Kremlin decided to employ the method of fait accompli and to act independently The Note of January 16, ostentatiously handed to the Allied Governments, was in itself a challenging move. Sikorski's appeals to the Allied Powers could

achieve little, the latter might try to persuade the Soviets, but it was very questionable whether they would adopt a firm stand and squash once and for all this abortive effort of the Kremlin to crack the 'United Allied Front' The Soviets' answer to the mild reprimands was merely to increase their pressure on this point.

The radio station of the Polish Embassy in Kuibyshev was suppressed by the N K.V.D., and the Embassy was informed that all Polish diplomatic representatives would probably be isolated.

On February 20, a member of the Ukrainian and All-Union Supreme Soviet, Alexander Korneichuk,*published an article in *Radianska Ukraina*, which was reproduced a day later in the Moscow newspapers, *Pravda* and *Izvestia*, and, since the *Tass* agency gave it wide-spread publicity, it was quoted at great length in the British and American Press.

This article, while praising the 'Polish people,' at the same time criticised the Polish Government, the members of which the author termed "landlords and imperialists," and then went on to express the conviction that "the present Polish ruling circles do not reflect the genuine opinion of the Polish people." Furthermore, passing over to the attack, its author misquoted passages from Polish newspapers in London, and imputed to the Polish leaders territorial designs on the lands of the Soviet Ukraine, stretching to the Dniepr river and the Black Sea. Thus, while the Kremlin, in its official Note, was claiming half the Polish territory, the Soviet official Press was at the same time accusing the Poles of endeavouring to occupy part of the U.S.S.R.

Articles such as these against Poland had frequently appeared in the local Soviet Press during the days of peace, and were part and parcel of the normal routine of Soviet propaganda. No one took them seriously in Russia, and no one read them abroad. But, in the strained atmosphere of Russo-Polish relations at this period, when every trifle was noticed and commented on in the world Press, this article of Korneichuk acted as a catalyst.

The Polish Press violently reacted against the direct provocation. Already on February 20 the Polish National Council in London had passed a resolution that the "integrity of the territory of the Polish Republic within its frontiers of September 1, 1939, and its sovereignty are inviolable and indivisible. No unilateral acts or illegal activities from any quarter whatsoever, directed against either the territory and the sovereignty of the Polish Republic or the rights of its citizens residing in Poland or

* Alexander Korneichuk, a journalist and playwright, came into prominence as the author of the play entitled 'Front' which expressed the new tendencies—the recent return to the former ideas of the Russian imperialism

As a member of the Supreme Council of the Soviet Ukraine, Korneichuk had entered Lwów with the Red Army and led the anti-Polish propaganda during the elections and subsequent incorporation of Eastern Poland into the Soviet Union. He was rewarded by Stalin's Literary Prize, and afterwards nominated on March 23rd, 1943, as a deputy Foreign Commissar of the U.S.S.R., and successively in the beginning of 1944 as the Ukrainian Foreign Minister

outside her territorial boundaries, can in any way alter this state of affairs.'

Acting under pressure of this public opinion (the deciding point being the resolution of the National Council) the Polish Government, on February 25, issued a declaration in answer to the charges conveyed in the Soviet propaganda.

The Declaration was worded as follows :—

" The Polish Government affirms that neither before the outbreak of this war, nor during it, has the Polish nation ever agreed to any co-operation with the Germans against the Soviet Union. In her relations with the U.S.S R., Poland has not ceased to be ready to co-operate with the Soviet Union in the prosecution of the war and in maintaining friendly, neighbourly relations after the victory

" The Polish Government repudiates most definitely the malicious propaganda which accuses Poland of indirect or direct inimical tendencies towards Soviet Russia. It is absolutely absurd to suspect Poland of intentions to base the eastern boundaries of the Polish Republic on the Dniepr and the Black Sea, or to impute to Poland any tendencies to move her frontier farther to the east.

" The Polish Government, which represents the Poland as she was within the boundaries of 1939, and first among the Allied nations to take up the fight imposed on her, has, from the moment of the conclusion of the Polish-Soviet Treaty of July 30, 1941, maintained the unchangeable attitude that, so far as the question of frontiers between Poland and Soviet Russia are concerned, the *status quo* previous to September 1, 1939, is in force, and considers the undermining of this attitude, which is in conformity with the Atlantic Charter, as detrimental to the unity of the Allied nations.

" The Polish Government considers the close co-operation and confidence between all the Allies as an indispensable factor for victory and permanent peace, and condemns all acts and suggestions tending to wreck or weaken the common front of the United Nations."

The attitude of the Kremlin was such that, after one and a half years, the Polish Government was left with no alternative but to inform the world of the true facts of the existing situation. It was no longer possible to conceal the truth, since the powerful apparatus of Soviet propaganda had already created a strong anti-Polish current among the British and American Press. Poland, whose cause had stood out clearly in 1939, now, it seemed, found herself placed in a very dubious position. Soviet imperialist claims had been presented in such a manner that to the insufficiently, or rather, the one-sidedly, informed reader, these claims seemed reasonable and just. The downward trend of Poland's stock in Britain and the U.S.A. had begun. It must be born in mind that the Soviets, like Hitler, commenced their diplomatic attacks by every assurance of their strictly limited intentions. In 1941, Stalin, had been ready to settle the Polish question formally, perhaps holding on to a few ' frontier districts,' as a concession to his prestige. As the German threat diminished, so his price rose—it remained, as yet, at half the Polish territories. But it was clear to every Pole who recalled the history of the Russian action in the eighteenth century, which had ended with the

partition of Poland, that Stalin was following in the footsteps of the Tsarina Catherine the Second, and that his aim was the annexation of their country. In the early days of 1943, however, this possibility had not then been anticipated in Allied circles, and in the ripening conflict, Poland was considered to be ' unreasonable ' over the attitude she had adopted.

As the conflict between Russia and Poland increased in intensity, so it became no longer possible either to pacify or settle matters through normal diplomatic channels, and when the Polish Government finally decided to defend the cause of their country in the eyes of the world, Moscow seized the opportunity to increase its verbal attack on Poland. Within a few days the Kremlin had replied to the Polish Statement, and it now seemed as if the Soviet's public prosecutor was accusing Poland of every crime against democracy, against self-determination of the nations, of breaking up the Slav front, pre-war co-operation with Germany and so forth In other words, every action which their own policy had led them to undertake during those years between 1939-1941, when Russia had been the ally of Germany, was now attributed to Poland and described as Polish crimes. Reality was reversed !

The following official Russian statement was issued by the Soviet news Agency on March 1 in reply to the Polish Declaration of February 25 .

" The Declaration of the Polish Government in London bears witness to the fact that the Polish Government refuses to recognise the historic rights of the Ukrainian and White Ruthenian peoples to be united within the National States

" Continuing to regard as legitimate the aggressive policy of imperialist States, which partitioned among themselves the traditional Ukrainian and White Ruthenian lands, and disregarding the universally known fact of the re-union of the Ukrainian and White Ruthenian peoples within their national States which has already taken place, the Polish Government is thus revealed as an advocate of a partition of the Ukrainian and White Ruthenian lands, in favour of the policy of plundering the Ukrainian and White Ruthenian peoples.

" The leading Soviet circles are of the opinion that the denial of the right of the Ukrainian and White Ruthenian peoples of re-union with their blood brethren bears witness to an imperialist tendency, whereas the references of the Polish Government to the Atlantic Charter have no foundation whatever. The Atlantic Charter does not entitle anyone to encroach on the national rights of the Ukrainians and White Ruthenians but, on the contrary, it has its origin in the principle of the recognition of the national rights of the peoples, including the Ukrainian and the White Ruthenian peoples.

" Even the well-known British Minister, Lord Curzon, in spite of his inimical attitude to the U.S S R , realised that Poland cannot put forward a claim to the Ukrainian and White Ruthenian lands, but the Polish ruling circles still show no understanding in this matter.

" The assertion of the Polish ruling circles that Poland, until the beginning of this war, refused to collaborate in any way with Germany against the Soviet Union does not correspond with reality. The whole world knows

of the pro-Fascist policy of rapprochement with Germany of the Polish Government and its Minister, Beck, who tried to oppose Poland to the Soviet Union.

"If the present war teaches us something, it is above all that the Slav peoples must not quarrel among themselves, but must live in friendship in order to rid themselves of the danger of the German yoke. The Polish ruling circles have learned nothing if they put forward claims to the Ukrainian and White Ruthenian lands, and thereby cultivate an enmity between the Polish people and the peoples of the Ukraine and White Ruthenia. Such a policy of the Polish leading circles weakens in the first place Poland herself, and breaks the united front of the Slav peoples in their struggle against German invasion.

"The Declaration of the Polish Government bears witness to the fact that the present Polish ruling circles do not reflect in this matter the genuine opinion of the Polish people, whose interests in the struggle for the liberation of their country and for the restoration of a strong and united Poland are indissolubly linked with the strengthening to the utmost of mutual confidence and friendship with the brotherly peoples of the Ukraine and White Ruthenia, as well as with the Russian people and the other peoples of the U.S.S.R."

The most pregnant feature of this Statement was its direct attack on the Polish Government, "the Polish ruling circles" who "do not reflect in this matter" (the statement was referring to Eastern Poland) "the genuine opinion of the Polish people." The 'leading Soviet circles' were therefore opposing the 'Polish ruling circles' to the 'Polish people,' whose genuine opinion, they, the Great Russians of Moscow, despite having no connection with Poland, presumed to know better than the Polish Government themselves.*

This statement enlarged on the text of the Note of January 16, referring to Eastern Poland and showed a complete reversal of the actual facts. It presented the Polish Government as claiming foreign territories (i.e., Poland's own) and of revealing thereby an 'imperialist tendency.' The name of Lord Curzon had no bearing on this matter—

* A few months later a similar case arose when Moscow, in the official newspaper *War and the Working Class*, (September 19th) expressed views which led one to suppose that she was better acquainted with English reality than the British themselves.

"Even in the first stage of the world war," *War and the Working Class* had written, "in 1939 and 1940, before the character of the War was definitely established, wide masses of English workmen maintained a more or less critical waiting attitude towards the war and defended in the factories only their immediate interests But after Hitler extended his aggression to the U.S.S R, and the Anglo-Soviet Treaty had been concluded, the English workmen began to support the English war effort."

Eden replied to this in the Commons on September 29th:

"When I read that," Eden commented, "there came to my mind the story of the Duke of Wellington Somebody came up to him and said. 'Mr. Smith, I think,' and the Duke replied, 'Sir, if you believe that you will believe anything.'"

"Those were my sentiments on reading that article. It does not represent the spirit there was in this country in the Battle of Britain and in 1940. It is true of that small section in this country which is represented by the Communist Party. But it would be a mistake to give that an importance it does not possess"

Moscow was claiming as her own, the Eastern Provinces of Poland as far as the 'Ribbentrop-Molotov Line.' Lord Curzon, the former Minister of Foreign Affairs in England had been in office in 1923 and, at his instigation, Great Britain and the other Allies had recognised the Polish-Russian frontier traced along the lines of the Treaty of Riga.

The Polish Government replied to the Soviet statement on March 4:

"Until the conclusion of agreements between the U.S S.R. and the Third Reich concerning the partition of Polish territories, the Treaty of Riga and its frontier clauses, approved in 1923 by the Conference of Ambassadors and by the United States, were never called in question by Russia. The Russo-German agreements were cancelled by the Polish-Soviet agreement of July 30, 1941. The question of any return to the German-Soviet line of that year requires no further comment.

"The so-called 'Curzon Line' was proposed during hostilities in 1919-1920 solely as an armistice line and not as a frontier.

"The polling ordered by the Soviet-occupying authorities in Eastern Poland in 1939 is contrary to international law. It constitutes one of those unilateral acts which are not recognised by the Allied nations. Therefore, it cannot form a basis for any legal acts, and cannot, in particular, deprive Polish citizens of their title to Polish citizenship or to relief organised for their benefit by the Polish Government with the aid of the Governments of Great Britain and the United States

"All German proposals previous to 1939, which were aimed at gaining the co-operation of Poland in military actions against Russia, were repeatedly rejected, and this led finally to a German attack on Polish territory in September, 1939.

"The Declaration of the Polish Government of February 25, 1943, backed unanimously by the entire Polish nation, was not intended to produce controversy which would be so harmful at the present moment. It only stated the indisputable Polish rights to these territories, in which the Polish nation will continue to live in harmony with its Ukrainian and White Ruthenian fellow-countrymen in accordance with the principles proclaimed by the Polish Government. The Polish Government, categorically rejecting the absurd insinuations concerning alleged Polish imperialistic claims in the East, has expressed, and continues to express, to the Soviet Government its readiness for an understanding based on friendly mutual relations."

The Soviet Notes bluntly discussing the question that half Poland now 'legally' belonged to Russia, were to increase the bitterness of the Poles against their Government, who was now to become the target for heavy attacks levelled by the Opposition. On February 17, Sikorski still claimed that the most important factor was to maintain the 'Unity of the Allied Nations,' but at the beginning of March the published Notes showed that this 'Unity' between Poland and Russia in fact no longer existed. The Polish-Soviet dispute had now finally come into the open. There was a great deal of anxiety among the Poles that, under British pressure, their Government might give in and go too far in its concessions towards Soviet demands. General Sosnkowski, the Successor-Designate to the Presidency of the Polish Republic, expressed the opinion of the Opposition in a letter published by the Press. He stated that he was "a partisan of

a lasting and rightful understanding between Poland and Russia." And if he had resigned from the Ministry in 1941, it was " merely because of the difference of opinion regarding the manner of expression and the formulation of the most important points in the Polish-Russian Agreement." He emphasised that " all Poles ought to be extremely indignant in the face of such unheard of claims, which the Soviets were one-sidedly endeavouring to deduce from the concluded Pact, reaching out their hands for Polish territories, for Polish rights, and for the citizens, who ought to have been released long ago from the prisons and labour camps and allowed to leave the U.S S.R."

The Soviet Note of March 1, publicly claiming half Poland, did very little to ease the minds of the Poles, particularly the soldiers in the Polish Army in the Middle East. General Anders, the Commander of that Army, in his Order of the Day on March 4, found it imperative to express his own and his soldiers' opinion :—

" The Soviet statement published by the official Press agency, denies Poland her sovereign rights to her Eastern provinces. The Soviet Union is thereby clearly stating that she wishes to retain that half of Poland occupied by her in 1939, as a result of her agreement with Germany. In addition, the Soviet Union is accusing the Polish Government, which was in power until September, 1939, of conducting a pro-German policy with the aim of opposing Poland against the U.S S.R.

" Soldiers ! In this period of crisis, I, your Commander, and the man who has shared with the majority of you the bitterness of prison fare, and the heavy destiny of slavery, who, together with you, has shed his blood defending the entirety of our territories ; who, through all the vagaries of life, is united with you, as with none other in life and death, I call upon you to remain calm. Remember that upon our attitude, upon the character of our actions depends, to a certain extent, the future of Poland.

"At the same time I hereby declare .

"(1). No Polish Government has ever negotiated with Germany against Soviet Russia. On the contrary, it was the Soviet Union who, by their Pact concluded with the Reich, just before this war, was able to attack us in the rear, making Poland's further resistance impossible.

"(2). Poland, who was the first to challenge the German invader and who is paying by the greatest of sacrifices ; the Poland, from whom had never emerged any group willing to collaborate with Germany, will never agree to the loss of any portion of her land, drenched in the blood of her people, and this one-sided statement of the Soviets by no means closes the question

"(3). In spite of our argument with the Soviet Union, we shall continue to fight against our common foe, Germany, side by side with our Allies, until the final victory and the liberation of our country. Have confidence in the future, believe in Providence and in the historic justice of our cause !

" Long live a free and independent Poland and her towns of Lwów and Wilno. ! "

Such was the position when, on April 12, the German News Agency, D.N.B., published a communique claiming that the German military authorities had discovered the mass graves of about ten thousand Polish

fficers in the Katyn forest, some fourteen miles west of Smolensk, which was now under their occupation, in a place described as a " holiday resort of the G.P.U." " These officers," the Agency alleged, " were murdered by special detachments of the Soviet political police." One mass grave, twenty-eight metres long by sixteen metres wide, was said to have contained the bodies of some three thousand Polish officers in full uniform all shot in the back of the head and lying face downwards in twelve layers. " Owing to the nature of the soil," it said, " the bodies had not decomposed, but had become mummified." As their documents were still in their pockets, the communique added, " all the bodies could be identified."

After the publication of this communique, the Germans issued fresh details almost daily, even giving the names of identified victims. They arranged for the representatives of the Press from all occupied Europe, together with any of the neutral Press who still remained in Germany, to visit the scene of this crime. Professors of pathology from twelve countries, and the following universities · Gandava (Belgium), Sofia (Bulgaria), Copenhagen (Denmark), Helsinki (Finland), Naples (Italy), Zagreb (Croatia), Groningen (Holland), Prague (Bohemia), Bukarest (Rumania), Geneva (Switzerland), Bratislava (Slovakia), Budapest (Hungary), Breslau (Germany) and representatives of the German High Command, together with representatives of the French Vichy Government, gathered at the investigation.

There were also Red Cross representatives from those twelve countries (and the Polish Red Cross), together with representatives from among the Polish officers in the prisoner-of-war camps in Germany who were brought in order to identify their colleagues. In addition, a few American, Canadian and British officers, prisoners of war, were also taken along to witness the proceedings.

On April 15, the Soviet Information Bureau issued a communiqué :

" In the past two or three days Goebbels' slanderers have been spreading vile fabrications alleging that Soviet authorities effected a mass shooting of Polish officers in the spring of 1940, in the Smolensk area. In launching this monstrous invention, the German-Fascist scoundrels do not hesitate at the most unscrupulous and base lies in their attempt to cover up crimes which, as has now become evident, were perpetrated by themselves.

" The German-Fascist reports on this subject leave no doubt as to the tragic fate of the former Polish prisoners-of-war who, in 1941, were engaged in constructional work in areas west of Smolensk and who, along with many Soviet people, residents of the Smolensk region, fell into the hands of the German-Fascist hangmen in the summer of 1941, after the withdrawal of the Soviet troops from the Smolensk area.

" Beyond doubt Goebbels' slanderers are now trying by lies and calumnies to cover up the bloody crimes of the Hitlerite gangsters. In their clumsily concocted fabrication about the numerous graves which the Germans allegedly discovered near Smolensk, the Hitlerite liars mention the village of Gnezdovaya. But, like the swindlers they are, they are silent

about the fact that it was near the village Gnezdovaja that the archaeological excavations of the historic " Gnezdovaja burial place " were made.

" Pastmasters in such affairs, the Hitlerites stoop to the clumsiest forgeries and misrepresentation of facts in spreading slanderous fabrications about some sort of Soviet atrocities allegedly perpetrated in the spring of 1940, and in this way try to shake off their own responsibility for the brutal crimes they have committed

" These arrant German-Fascist murderers, whose hands are stained with the blood of hundreds of thousands of innocent victims, who methodically exterminate the populations of countries they have occupied without sparing children, women or old people, who exterminated many hundreds of thousands of Polish citizens in Poland itself, will deceive no one by their base lies and slander. The Hitlerite murderers will not escape a just and inevitable retribution for their bloody crimes."

At any rate the Soviet communiqué established that those Polish officers in U.S.S R., whom their Government were trying to locate since August 1, 1941, had at last been traced, but—they were dead.

On April 16 a communiqué was issued in London by the Polish Minister of National Defence, giving full information concerning these murdered officers in the U.S S.R., and explaining how the Polish authorities had been searching for them in vain for so long, and how, in spite of numerous friendly requests from the Polish side, the Russian authorities had, up to date, persisted in their refusal to produce a plausible solution of this problem. As previously stated, the Polish Government had been persistently told, in answer to all their enquiries, that these officers " are at liberty," that " they have been dispersed to various parts of Russia," or " we are unable to trace them."

"In view of the detailed information given by the Germans," ran the communiqué, " concerning the finding of the bodies of many thousands of Polish officers near Smolensk, and the categorical declaration that they were murdered by the Soviets in the Spring of 1940," and since the Soviets categorically declared on April 15 that these officers had been murdered by the Germans, the Polish Government decided to request the authorities of the International Red Cross to send their delegates to the place where the Polish prisoners-of-war were said to have been massacred.

On April 17 the Polish Government gave out the following statement :

" There is no Pole who would not be deeply shocked by the news of the discovery near Smolensk, in a common grave, of the massacred bodies of the Polish officers missing in the U.S S.R. and of the mass execution of which they have been victims, news of which is being given the widest publicity by German propaganda. The Polish Government on 15th April instructed their representative in Switzerland to request the International Red Cross in Geneva to send a delegation which would investigate on the spot the true state of affairs. It is to be desired that the findings of this protecting institution, which is to be entrusted with the task of clarifying he matter and of establishing responsibility, should be issued without delay."

Issuing this communiqué on April 17, the Polish Government " at the same time, however, denied the Germans any right to draw from a crime

which they ascribed to others, arguments in their own defence." And the communiqué went on to mention numerous German crimes which had been perpetrated against the Polish prisoners-of-war, such as shooting many of them for "political offences alleged to have been committed before the war."

Among the massacred men were identified the bodies of officers who had been on the retired list long before the war, men who were between sixty and seventy, even eighty, years of age. According to the explanation given out by the Soviets, all of these men, including twelve generals and three hundred colonels, had been employed on fortification works. The German and European Press published many photographs of documents taken from the bodies of these men, and after the members of the Polish Red Cross had investigated the open grave, all doubts disappeared. The Germans, basing their facts on dated papers found on the bodies, stated that the murder had been perpetrated in April, 1940, therefore approximately about the time when the families of the murdered men had received their last news from them.

There were certain discrepancies in the details given out by the Germans and, still vigorously denying these accusations, Soviet propaganda was not slow in pointing these out and ridiculing the German statements. When the Soviet armies later re-occupied Smolensk in September, 1943, Moscow (according to her statement of January, 1944) set up a special commission to investigate the Katyn murder. This commission "for ascertaining and investigating the circumstances of the shooting of the Polish officer prisoners by the German-Fascist invaders in the Katyn forest" was exclusively composed of Russians. The only time the Soviets permitted any Poles on the scene of this massacre was when Polish soldiers from the units formed by the Soviets, composed the guard-of-honour at the re-burial of these officers. The Commission found the details reported by the Germans to have been entirely true, and on January 27, 1944, published its report, differing from the German description only on one point—it concluded that the crime had been committed in the autumn of 1941, not in the April of 1940, therefore, after the occupation of Smolensk by the Germans. The report stated :—

"The Commission has verified and established on the spot that the graves of the Poles shot by the Germans are situated ten miles from Smolensk along the highway to Vitebsk, in the area of Katyn forest called Kozie Gory. More than 11,000 corpses were discovered in the graves clothed in Polish military uniforms. The coroners made a detailed examination of the exhumed corpses and of those documents and material evidence which had been found on the corpses and the graves. At the same time the Commission conducted an interrogation of numerous witnesses among the local population whose evidence established conclusively the time and circumstances of the crimes committed by the German invaders."

The conclusions of the Commission were stated to be as follows :—

"The Polish prisoners-of-war were shot by the Germans, not only at Katyn but at the other places. The object was (1) to wipe out enemies,

(2) to place the blame on the Soviet Union; (3) to swell their statistics of enemy casualties

" Medical and scientific experts have established (the report went on) that the bodies and articles of clothing were well preserved, especially the uniforms, belts and buttons, proving that they had been buried in the spring of 1942 at the latest

" Before the Germans captured Smolensk, in the western districts of the Smolensk region, Polish prisoners-of-war, officers and men, worked on the construction and repair of highways. These Polish prisoners-of-war were quartered in three camps, fifteen to twenty-seven miles west of Smolensk. It was established from the evidence of witnesses and by documentary material that, after the beginning of military operations, and in the circumstances that had arisen, the camps could not be evacuated in time and all Polish prisoners-of-war, as well as part of the guard and staff of the camps, fell into German hands.

"An examination of the uniforms has revealed that the prisoners were searched In some cases the pockets had not been examined. Scraps of newspapers, pamphlets, prayer-books, postage stamps, letters, receipts, notes, and other documents and valuable objects were found in pockets, in the lining of uniforms, trouser belts, and socks."

It was reported that the following "general conclusions" had been reached by the Commission :—

"(1). The Polish prisoners-of-war held by the Russians in three camps near Smolensk were abandoned in the retreat of the Red Army.

"(2) Mass executions of Polish prisoners-of-war from these camps were carried out in the Katyn Forest in the autumn of 1941 by the German occupation authorities

"(3). The mass execution of Polish prisoners of-war in the Katyn Forest was carried out by a German organisation which concealed its identity under the alias of ' headquarters of the 537th Construction Battalion.' "

A Reuter correspondent, who, with other foreign correspondents, had attended the investigation in the Katyn Forest, telegraphed the following account from Moscow :—

" We climbed a mound and looked down into a huge rectangular pit. The stench of death filled the air. Below us, packed in the pit like sardines in a tin, we saw several layers of bodies, just as though a section of a football crowd had been lifted up bodily and pressed in the earth. The bodies appeared in a fair state of preservation but were compressed and mummified. The shrunken figures looked more like rag dolls than the bodies of what had once been normal, healthy men.

" One of the biggest graves contained eight layers of bodies, the total number being variously estimated at between 8,000 and 10,000. Until all the graves are fully opened up it will be impossible to tell with any certainty the exact number. Professor Victor Prozorovsky, Director of the Moscow Central Institute of Pathological Research, who is in charge of the investigation, thinks the total number is between 12,000 and 15,000.

" Eleven teams of surgeons and assistants are carrying out the *post-mortem* examinations. Working from dawn to dusk, they deal with a total of about 160 bodies daily. All the bodies so far examined have been shot through the back of the head with a revolver bullet, which traversed the brain and came out the other side, indicating that execution took place at

the closest range. Some were found with their hands tied behind their backs." *

In the sixteenth century, an Englishman, Giles Fletcher,† had written, after his visit to Moscow: "But for the most part the prisoners condemned in the summer are kept for the winter, to be knocked on the head and put under the ice." That was in the sixteenth century, and now the Germans were accusing the Russians of a similar murder in the Katyn forest, and they in their turn were accusing the Germans.

The Polish Government sought the truth They did not attempt to sum up without a thorough investigation, they had no wish to assume any hasty verdict Evidence from every possible quarter was diligently sifted. And if those investigations eventually led the Polish Government to the conclusion that it had not been the Germans who had perpetrated the crime, ought they to have stated this publicly? . . . And what of the repercussions of such a statement? What then of keeping the front of United Nations? "Was the war to be lost over these 10,000 officers who had been murdered?" demanded one leader of the United Nations of the Polish Premier. The former Minister of Information, Stronski, expressing the feelings of the Poles on April 22, wrote in London's *Dziennik Polski* (Polish Daily):

"One thing is certain. In that mass grave near Smolensk are lying the murdered Polish officers. There are perhaps eight thousand or ten thousand, or more, in that place, but of what avail is the difference in these figures. The fact remains that, lying there are people murdered in an appalling manner. Defenceless and unarmed men!

"Who has committed this murder? The Germans are accusing the Russians. The Russians are accusing the Germans.

"We Poles, by a supreme effort of will-power, are trying to refrain from proclaiming a premature verdict . . . We are setting aside the persistent question, why, when we were asking "where are these men?" did not the Soviets answer plainly: "We left them in construction works near Smolensk and they have fallen into German hands"? This answer was so simple, and Germany's guilt would then perforce have been established.

"We are trying to bear in mind all the German crimes, and the ability of the Germans to commit any type of crime, and therefore this murder as well. We are awaiting conclusive evidence and we repeat to the world: 'we know nothing' But we do know that what has happened is a crime the like of which has seldom been recorded in history. The last time a crime such as this was perpetrated, was in Kiev and Odessa, where several thousand defenceless officers had been murdered during the Civil War.

"On this occasion it was at the end of a campaign and the Polish officers were prisoners-of-war. They represented no threat to anyone. They were

* *Time*, February 7th, 1944:—
When the correspondents were permitted to put questions, one asked why, if the slaughter had been in August or September, many of the corpses wore fur-lined coats?

† Fletcher, J, *On the Russian Commonwealth*, London, 1591, p 52.

protected by the customs and laws under which even the most savage of wars is conducted, and yet they were shot. Why? Was the reason because they were officers, or Poles, or both? Why were they murdered so disgracefully?

"To-day the murdered men have arisen from their graves, and they demand reparation from civilised peoples for this crime. Passed beyond our world, they understand the people of this world and know how much easier it is to pass judgment while the identity of the murderer is still cloaked. When he is revealed, the political bearings on the situation will twist the judgment of the jury.

"The world must answer to this crime. How will it appear, when the neutrals have seen this accusation and when there can be no doubt that everyone has condemned this crime in his soul, and when both the Germans and Russians are accusing the other of this crime, because neither wish to acknowledge it as his own. How will it appear if we will not hear the voice of accusation from those who are fighting in the name of Christianity for the individual and for society? Why then is there no public judgment given regarding this crime?

"If we do not heed this voice we shall lose our faith in the promised punishment of war criminals . . . Honest people, and our friends—speak up and say whether you believe in moral righteousness or only in a political gamble covered by the falsehood of common phraseology? Speak to-day, to-morrow will be perhaps too late. We, who are standing over the graves of our murdered men, ask of you so little. Don't fail us, lest the Hitlerian cynicism revealed in their communique of yesterday was right when it announced to the world that the 'Poles have only two types of friends. One are the Soviets, who are preparing the mass graves for them, and the other the British and American, who are not willing to hinder the Bolsheviks in the realisation of their 'friendly' designs towards Poland'

". . . and you will not fail to see the next truth . . . You will understand what future lies in store for Poland and the Poles. Not a fight, for in battle both sides are armed and the weaker has a choice—victory or a soldier's death. But our enemies desire to kill the Poles even as they are—defenceless. To plunder, to exploit their work and afterwards to murder them so that even the traces of their victims have perished . . . And now you understand why we are so anxious about our frontiers. Each foot of our soil which passes into the hand of our foe—is our grave, a mass grave . . ."

"The record of the Russian Government is such," wrote the *New York Times* on April 27, "that not even its staunchest friend can reject the story as beyond the possibility of having some basis in fact." The Katyn story was to have tremendous repercussions in Europe, German propaganda did its utmost to exploit the case to the full and undoubtedly it had a great success. For some time 'the kidnapping of Polish children by the Soviets' and the 'Katyn murders' were Goebbel's favourite topics.

It is difficult to establish the reasons which Moscow had at that time for launching a propaganda offensive against the Polish Government. Was it merely the Katyn affair or something else beneath the surface of things? On April 19, *Pravda* strongly criticised the Polish request for the International Red Cross to investigate the German allegations,

terming it " unreasonable and provocative."* Russia, as it was known, was in no way connected with any international organisation and, from the first, there were doubts as to whether Moscow would recognise any investigation made by the International Red Cross as being the " absolute guarantee of impartiality." *Pravda* wrote :

" The Polish leaders, have fallen into the trap of Goebbels' provocateurs and thus, in effect, have supported the lying tricks and libellous inventions of the executioners of the Polish people." The Soviet News Agency, *Tass*, went even further. And in the statement published on April 20, they said : " The fact that the anti-Soviet campaign began simultaneously in the German and Polish Press and is proceeding on the same plane, enables us to presume that this anti-Soviet campaign is carried out by preliminary agreement between the German invaders and the Polish pro-Hitler turncoats from General Sikorski's ministerial circles."

On the following day the International Red Cross declined the Polish request, since one of the parties concerned, i.e., Moscow, was opposed to any investigation Thus for the time being the problem of the fate of these thousands of Polish officers was left unsolved, or at any rate further investigation was closed to the Polish Government. Up to that date the British Press had made few comments, preferring rather to wait, and it seemed as if the affair was to make little stir after all in the camp of the United Nations. But the Kremlin's intentions were otherwise and if, in the first days of the Katyn affair, they had limited themselves to denials and to producing other explanations of this tragedy, the Soviet Government now attacked the Poles so violently over their attitude, that a crisis was inevitable. The American and British public were informed that there was a serious conflict between the two Allied Governments With each succeeding day Moscow deliberately widened the scope of its cam-

* The Editor, *The Nineteenth Century and After*, June, 1943.

" Poland, Russia and Great Britain ".—The Polish appeal to the International Red Cross has at least drawn one categorical statement from the Russians, namely, that these officers had fallen into the hands of the Germans near Smolensk in the summer of 1941 . . . But if the Russian Government knew this to be so, why did they not impart their knowledge to the Polish Government in response to the repeated enquiries made in the second half of the year 1941 and at the beginning of 1942 ? And why was nothing known as to the fate of these officers from the time they were last heard of (the spring of 1940) until the time (the summer of 1941) the Germans, according to the Russian allegation, captured them ? Besides, it is inconceivable that eight thousand, three hundred officers, prisoners-of-war in Russian custody, could have been captured by the Germans without the knowledge of the Russian authorities. If these officers had been captured by the enemy there must have been some witnesses to the capture and they must at least have been missed soon afterwards. It would have been easy for the Russian Government, had they even suspected at the time, that the Polish officers had disappeared in this way, to say so when the Polish-Russian Agreement was signed in 1941, instead of saying that they had all been released from Russian internment camps, so that Polish authorities counted on their arrival at any time.

Russia is accountable for the eight thousand, three hundred Polish officers. But she has not been able to account for them except by the hitherto unverified assertion that they were murdered by the Germans.

paign against the Polish Government through the Russian Information Bureau, and also through the inspired press in America and Britain. The article of the above-mentioned *Pravda* criticising the Polish communiqué, was headed " The Polish Supporters of Hitler." The *Soviet War News* in London declared that " the ministerial circles of General Sikorski, and in particular the Polish Minister of National Defence, were declared the accomplices of the cannibal Hitler " The same Russian newspaper accused the Polish Government of entering " into contact and agreement with the Hitlerites " and of dealing a " treacherous blow to the common cause."*

New York Times headed its cable, "*Pravda* states · The Poles have fallen into the Hitlerite trap. Sikorski's regime accused of helping the Hitlerite hangmen, repeating accusations of massacre." Discussion in the Allies' Press switched from the question · " Who has murdered the Polish officers ?" to the theme : " Was the Polish Government correct in appealing to the International Red Cross for investigation ? " *The Spectator* on May 1 wrote : " There is more to be said for leaving the dead to their sleep. No amount of investigation will bring them to life." The *New Statesman* went so far as to write on the same day : " Sensible Poles must be asking how their Government ever made so crazy a proposal. Why did they not ask the Red Cross to investigate the assassination, reported on such terribly convincing evidence, of many hundreds of thousands of civilian Poles by the Nazis." Thus echoed the voice of fear at the thought that executioner of those "thousands of defenceless prisoners-of-war murdered in cold blood" might not be in the enemy camp. And for a similar reason "the fellow-nationals of these victims," wrote E. R Russell, in a letter to *The Spectator*, " who wished to investigate the matter, are the subject of cruel gibes in certain sections of the British Press ; while other more serious papers advocate a peace-at-any-price policy, neither of which seem to me to give any expression to our much-vaunted sense of justice and fair play."

During the night of April 25, Molotov, the Peoples' Commissar for Foreign Affairs, summoned the Polish Ambassador and informed him that the U.S.S.R. had decided to break off relations with Poland, and handed him the following Note .

" The Soviet Government considers the recent behaviour of the Polish Government with regard to the U.S.S R., as entirely abnormal, and violating all regulations and standards of relations between two Allied States. The slanderous campaign, hostile to the Soviet Union, launched by the German Fascists in connection with the murder of the Polish officers, which they themselves committed in the Smolensk area on territory occupied by German troops, was at once taken up by the Polish Government and is being fanned in every way by the Polish official Press.

" Far from offering a rebuff to the vile Fascist slander of the U S S.R., the Polish Government did not even find it necessary to address to the Soviet Government any inquiry or request for an explanation on this subject.

" Having committed a monstrous crime against the Polish officers, the Hitlerite authorities are now staging a farcical investigation, and for this they have made use of certain Polish pro-Fascist elements whom they themselves selected in occupied Poland, where everything is under Hitler's heel, and where no honest Pole can openly have his say.

* April 29th and 30th, 1943.

" For the ' investigation ' both the Polish Government and the Hitlerite Government invited the International Red Cross, which is compelled, in conditions of a terroristic regime, with its gallows and mass extermination of the peaceful population, to take part in this investigation farce staged by Hitler. Clearly such an ' investigation,' conducted behind the back of the Soviet Government, cannot evoke the confidence of people possessing any degree of honesty.

" The fact that the hostile campaign against the Soviet Union commenced simultaneously in the German and Polish Press, and was conducted along the same lines, leaves no doubt as to the existence of contact and accord in carrying out this hostile campaign between the enemy of the Allies, Hitler —and the Polish Government.

" While the peoples of the Soviet Union, bleeding profusely in a hard struggle against Hitlerite Germany, are straining every effort for the defeat of the common enemy of the Russian and Polish peoples, and of all freedom-loving democratic countries, the Polish Government, to please Hitler's tyranny, has dealt a treacherous blow to the Soviet Union.

" The Soviet Government is aware that this hostile campaign against the Soviet Union is being undertaken by the Polish Government in order to exert pressure upon the Soviet Government by making use of the slanderous Hitlerite fake for the purpose of wresting from it territorial concessions at the expense of the interests of the Soviet Ukraine, Soviet Byelorussia and Soviet Lithuania.

"All these circumstances compel the Soviet Government to recognise that the present Government of Poland, having slid on to the path of accord with Hitler's Government, has actually discontinued allied relations with the U.S.S R., and has adopted a hostile attitude towards the Soviet Union.

" On the strength of the above, the Soviet Government has decided to sever relations with the Polish Government."

Molotov, in his Note, had made the accusation of ' contact and accord ' between Hitler and the Polish Government. It was a paradoxical statement since that same Soviet Foreign Commissar, by his ' contact and accord ' with Germany in the first place had been able to capture those several thousand Polish officers, who had disappeared only to be found in that terrible Katyn pit. The Note of the Polish Government had been couched in very moderate terms, not accusing, but asking for an explanation Under the German accusation, the Soviet Government merely changed its role from defendant to public prosecutor with ' no doubt as to the existence ' of ' contact between Hitler and Sikorski.'

The indignation expressed by Molotov in a Note regarding the " investigation, conducted behind the back of the Soviet Government," and his conviction that such an " investigation could not evoke the confidence of people possessing any degree of honesty " was ill-founded. As it has been recorded above, when the Soviet Government had conducted an investigation in the Katyn Forest in January, 1944, not one foreigner was allowed to assist even as an onlooker, and the entire action had been accomplished behind the backs of the Polish and Allied Governments.

Anglo-American opinion, unaware of the actual facts, and taking the reports of both parties into consideration (the moderate attitude of the

Poles and the fury expressed by the Russians) was varied over this question of guilt. The majority of those who formulated the views simply did not wish to admit the possibility of such a terrible blow to the 'united front' of the Allied Nations. It was a test and they did not consider it to be an opportune moment for a test of such kind as this

The main reason why the Soviets severed diplomatic relations with Poland was inserted at the end of the Note, and worded in the typically Soviet manner. They alleged that the Polish Government was trying to "extort" from the Soviet Union "territorial concessions at the expense of the Soviet Ukraine, Soviet White Ruthenia and Soviet Lithuania" The Note, therefore, presented the Polish Government, whose action had been limited to the preservation of its own territories, as the 'attacking Power,' and the Soviets as the 'defending Power.'

According to Soviet reasoning, the war started only on June 22, 1941. Before that date it was merely a struggle between the imperialist Powers. Thus Moscow chose to consider her Empire as the one within the frontiers of that year. Therefore, the Kremlin presented Eastern Poland as Soviet territory in its Note, and the Government of Poland as an 'imperialist Power' and as Russia's successor in the camp of Hitler.

One fact was made clear—Moscow intended to hold on to the Polish territory as far as the 'Ribbentrop-Molotov Line' of 1939, without waiting (as London and Washington suggested) until the end of the war for the settlement of frontier problems. Lack of success in achieving their designs would not deter the Soviets, simply because such designs were and are normal features of the life of any imperialist Power. Failing to get even an indirect answer from the Allies, Stalin had put his demand regarding Eastern Poland into action directly, and in his own name. Russia's relations with Poland were now merely a burden to Stalin and, taking advantage of the first opportunity, he had severed them

The Note of April 25 "sizzled with anger," but many speeches and statements in the Soviet regime are couched in terms unusual to the diplomacy of other countries, for while strong words might make no impression on the opponent, they would impress their own people. Impulsiveness was not one of the features of the masters of the Kremlin. Stalin, as perhaps the greatest diplomat ever to have occupied the throne of the Tsar, coldly considered every problem, and it was most unlikely that even a Note worded in such an unusual manner was the expression of a fit of temper.

Was this first break in the camp of the Allies the result of a long-considered plan, the beginnings of a Russian independent policy towards the settlement of the problems of Eastern Europe, Central Europe, in fact, of all Europe? And, above all, was it an expression of the Russian feeling of supremacy in the game, and the first warning to Britain? The commentator of the C.B.S, broadcasting from Moscow on April 28,

described the Soviet Note to Poland in cautious words as being the " milestone in Russian foreign policy—a foreign policy which is going to be very, very important to the world around the post-war conference table." No one at that time wanted to recognise that Russia intended to achieve her first goal before the victorious Powers sat around such a table. The attempts of London and Washington to prevent this break in the Alliance had been in vain. It was simply the commencement of an attack undertaken by Russian diplomacy against the Allies, and Poland was but the first geographical objective.* Once more she found herself in a similar position to the one she had held in 1939 during the Anglo-Franco-German clash Once again, until the attacking Power concentrated the fury of its attack against Poland and overcame that country, it would be unable to advance further to the next line and storm it. A preparatory move in this direction was made shortly afterwards by the Soviets, when on July 29, 1943, the establishment of the ' Committee of Free Germans ' was announced in Moscow.

There was an amazing similarity between the tactics of the leaders of the Soviet Union during the Second Great War and the Tsarist diplomacy of the First Great War. This similarity extended away back into the centuries of conquest made by some of the most prominent representatives of Tsardom.

One of the methods most frequently employed was to level accusations against the leaders of a neighbouring country which, in the opinion of Moscow, was ripe for annexation In the event of its leaders entirely and unreservedly refusing to submit to Russia, then usurpers to whom Tsardom gave every assistance were brought forward, men who it was professed indicated the ' genuine will ' of the nation which was being attacked and under whose name Muscovy could and did impose its wishes. By the Muscovite law, no leading element in a newly conquered country was allowed to remain alive. If there was no resistance, then Tsardom, in order to justify its actions, invariably imposed terms which were impossible to fulfil or meant suicide for the leaders and the people.†

In April,1943, the Soviet Note to the Polish Government was accompanied by two such demands, namely, to give up any ' claim ' to Eastern Poland and to change some of the most hated and ' guilty ' members of the Polish Government, among them the Minister of National Defence,

* The German News Agency *Transocean* not altogether inaccurately observed (April 29th, 1943) '—it was hardly imaginable that Soviet Russia was attaching any decisive importance to the attitude of the Polish emigre government towards the frontier question and, therefore, the opinion prevailed that Moscow's attitude in the long run, was directed against England and the United States and represented another accentuation of Soviet mistrust of the Allied Powers.

† Giles Fletcher related how the Tsar had demanded several cart-loads of cedars from the city of Tver, although no cedars grew in that area, and from another small town a cup of fleas. As neither towns were able to satisfy these demands the sought-for opportunity to punish them was created.

as being responsible for the communiqué regarding the Katyn murder. The Poles, acquainted with Russian methods, had no doubt but that the Soviet Note, severing relations between the two countries, uncovered the greatest political crisis in the Second Great War, and the beginning of Russo-British rivalry for the domination of Europe and part of Asia. It was clear that, whatever terms used by the Kremlin towards Poland, it boiled down to only one demand, ' surrender.' It was ' renounce half your country and place in the remainder a friendly government under our control.' This was what ' surrender ' meant to Poland. Therefore, the first demand was not really so essential to the Soviets, since once the Polish Government had come under their control they could establish whatever frontiers they desired, or else not even establish frontiers, since they would be annexing the whole country. The real meaning behind this Note was " shall Poland exist ? " " Shall the Europe which is being fought over exist ? "

The ruling Russian class laid claim to knowing the ' genuine opinion ' of the Polish people better than the Polish Government itself, and on this ground demanded drastic changes within that Government. Such demands were nihil novi in the Polish-Russian historic relations. The Tsarina, Catherine the Second, had put forward the same principle in the eighteenth century when, as ' guarantor of the freedom and independence of the Polish Republic,' she had assumed, that not only had she the 'right,' but it was ' her duty ' to nominate persons to positions of authority in Poland, extending this ' privilege ' even to the throne itself. The result of this protecting policy had been the partition of that country. Stalin similarly wished to decide who in the neighbouring countries would be sufficiently pro-Soviet enough to hold a governmental position. The demands of the Kremlin's over-lord were made in quick succession—each one fulfilled became valueless to him and a fresh one, for new concessions would be pushed forward . . . Finally, under some trifling pretext, the victim, almost unaware, would be locked in the prison of the Soviet Union.

The majority of the Allied Press approached the question of the Russian-Polish break from the view-point of the Westerner, and were unable to appraise the situation at its true value. It was only after a year of continuous Russian aggressive action that this understanding began to dawn. In the meantime, the situation remained confused. " The plain truth of history is that, for Russia and for Germany, a living and strong Poland is a necessity," wrote the *Manchester Guardian* on June 18. " It can be a bulwark of peace for them ; its absence involves a constant threat of war. Stalin, like the realist statesman he is, has learned the necessity of Poland to Russia and has declared for a strong and independent Poland." This comment was alien to Moscow First and foremost, imperialist Powers, such as Russia or Germany, were not endeavouring to have any ' bulwark of peace ' for such a ' bulwark ' would only call a halt to their

expansion. Furthermore, they have no wish for any buffer-states on their frontiers. Joffe, the Chairman of the Russian Peace Delegation in Riga, expressed this opinion in 1920 when, referring to the Ukraine, he had remarked, " the buffer-state must be within the Soviet frontiers." A score of years later the same story was to be repeated and this time with Poland.

It is interesting to read the expoundings of the Soviet and German leaders on this topic after the defeat of Poland, when they both referred to the States which stood between them as the " breeding-ground of conflict and wars." Hitler seems to have expressed their mutual thoughts in his speech before the Reichstag even better than Molotov before the Supreme Soviet of the U.S.S.R. (see Vol. 1, p. 196). Hitler boasted " Germany and Russia together will relieve one of the most acute danger spots in Europe of its threatening character . . . The German Government will never allow the residual Polish State of the future to become in any sense a disturbing factor for the Reich itself and still less a source of disturbance between the German Reich and Soviet Russia Poland of the Versailles Treaty will never rise again. This is guaranteed by two of the largest States in the world."

An imperialist state requires no ' bulwark of peace ' on its frontier, but merely a spring-board for the next war. Therefore, when the rulers of Moscow spoke of a ' strong ' Poland, it could only have meant a vassal state supported by the might of Russia and acting under her orders. An independent Poland, independent in the Western sense of that term, had always been and always will be considered as a nuisance by the Kremlin, as the ' bastard ' of some treaty, and as a potential danger. Irrespective of what policy Poland adopted, the Soviets interpreted it as being contrary to their own, and neither words, promises nor pacts would convince them of the sincerity of Poland's attitude.

There was much striving in the World Press to understand the sense of Russia's break with the Polish Government; it was difficult to acknowledge the plain and bitter truth. *The Economist* on May 8, saw behind this Russo-Polish dispute only the—

" delicate problem of Poland's future Eastern frontier," and remarked that the ' Curzon Line ' . . . " was dismissed by Lenin himself as unfair to the Poles."

" The Russians want a ' free and independent ' Poland," wrote *Economist.* " They have said so. Yet is it absolutely certain that the terms are not being used ambiguously? Could ' free ' mean ' Soviet ' ? Could ' independently ' mean free only to have the option of inclusion in the Soviet Union? The Soviet decision to make all Poles, evacuated in 1939 from Eastern Poland into Soviet citizens, even though they may be natives of Western Poland; the formation of a Union of Polish Patriots in Moscow; the decision to answer the Polish demand for a Red Cross enquiry by the most extreme form of protest, the breaking off of relations—all these actions have sown doubts about the meaning attached by the Soviet Government to their earlier pledge "

The Economist was certain that "without confidence and friendship there is no solution at all" But the history of imperialist Muscovy, a history of continuous annexation of other countries throughout a period of over five hundred years, neither knew nor recognised confidence and friendship in politics. It was against the very nature of things for Russia.

The *New York Times* on April 30, wrote :

"The Molotov Note and the official comment in *Izvestia* suggest that the Soviet aim is to overthrow the Sikorski Government The frontier is the real point at issue, and there is no doubt this question could be easily settled if the London regime could be replaced by the Committee of 'Polish Patriots' in Moscow.

In appraising the situation, the *New York World Telegram* went much further but much closer to the truth.

". . . By breaking with Poland, Russia has begun to clear the air. If she shoves Poland into the camp of her enemies, her technical position will be vastly improved when, after the war, she lays claim to much of Eastern Europe . . Moscow has increased the fears of Europe and America that she wants to dominate the post-war world."

Such were the boldest among the opinions given by the Press, but the majority were simply afraid to recognise the reality, for by recognising it the question arose : "What is this war about ? To aid Russia to establish domination in Europe instead of Germany ?" Few people wanted to look forward in the Spring of 1943 and see that the German problem solved was only, perhaps, half the problem of Europe settled. The task seemed too great for one generation of the Western world, who, unwilling to enter the war in the first place, was endeavouring to finish it as soon as possible.

Moscow's demands for internal changes in the Polish Government came as a certain shock to the public opinion in the U.S. and Britain, uncovering as it did the true meaning of the Soviet's designs. Hitler had put similar suggestions to the British Government prior to the outbreak of the war, i.e., to change the Government to one more sympathetic to the Nazi cause, and in 1941, Hitler's confidant, Hess, had come to England with the same request.

"There is no other Government" the *Tablet* wrote on May 8, "in the Grand Alliance which dreams of making such requests or demands of Allies and no type of suggestion is more likely to rock the boat in which so many Allies sit together.

"Nations with free institutions will always be nations with many economic classes and political parties, and it will be the end of such free institutions in Eastern Europe if attempts are made from Moscow to call the Communists and their sympathisers 'the people, the whole people and nothing but the people,' when they are in truth in every European land a much mistrusted minority faction, infected with an alien ideology."

Time and Tide arrived at the conclusion that . "... the Polish Nation is, to-day, more united than it ever was before . . . None of the internal conflicts or differences that afflict the French, the Yugoslavs, the Czecho-Slovaks and others afflict the Poles. This is all the more remarkable because the Poles have, in the past, shown excessive factiousness . . ."

The Americans and British made an essential error during this discussion as to whether or not the Polish Government represented the Polish people. In their appraisal of this problem, the Press employed the criterion which held good during both peace and war in their happier countries, where the internal life was beyond the scope of disasters directly inflicted by war and occupation. The Polish people were actually in the battle zone, in the centre of the typhoon, and the problem of government was therefore more limited—in that country there had to be a real truce between parties existing in the Underground since no opportunity to influence or arrange any question in connection with internal policy could arise. "The Poles in Poland," explained an officer of the Underground Army, who had recently arrived from that country, to the British Foreign Secretary, "enslaved as they are, look to the Government as the projection of their own hopes, something apart from personalities, a symbol which is valuable to them because it has been upheld."* The political question of the moment was concentrated in their foreign policy, and the Polish people with the unity which astonished even the most hardened critic, were not concerned as to whether the Government was 'right' or 'left' but only how efficiently it was prosecuting the Polish war-aims. Under these circumstances any legal Polish Government would have had the support of its people as long as it was fighting for the integrity of their State.

From the April of 1943, the slogan of a 'friendly government' Poland became the chief factor in Moscow's propaganda campaign against the Polish Government. What that term implied can be judged by the events in those countries where such 'friendly governments' had been instituted by the Soviets. Bilmanis, the Latvian Ambassador in the U.S., in his book *The Baltic States and the Baltic Sea* (New York, 1942), gave a remarkable description of the technique applied by Moscow in connection with similar governments in order to attain the submission and subsequent annexation of the country.

The first stage was, as Bilmanis wrote, "The Mutual Assistance treaties forced upon the Baltic States, ostensibly to protect them against aggression from 'any great European Power,' i e, Germany and Great Britain.

Then comes the second stage:

"After the fall of Paris on June 13, 1940, Soviet Russia . . presented a short-termed ultimatum to Lithuania on June 14, to Latvia and Estonia on June 15, 1940, demanding, under threat of immediate bombardment, the establishment in the Baltic countries of pro-Soviet governments and free entrance for Russian troops. The Soviet ultimatum to Latvia was backed by sixteen divisions massed at the Latvian frontier . . . Russia presented 'reasons' for this act of aggression; she charged that Latvia had conspired with the other Baltic States of Estonia and Lithuania (six million population altogether) to attack Russia."

"During the last years," writes the official Soviet pamphlet, (*The Soviet Union, Finland and the Baltic States*, the Soviet Information Bureau, 1941,

* *The Times*, February 9th, 1944.

p. 28), " the Governments of Latvia, Estonia and Lithuania showed by all their behaviour that they were prepared to aid Hitler in every way. In these circumstances . the anti-Soviet policy of the Governments of the Baltic States, the U.S S.R. was compelled to demand from all three States the formation of such Governments as would be capable and willing to ensure that the pacts of mutual assistance would be loyally carried out."

The third stage was .—

" Together with the numerous Soviet troops, emissaries arrived at Tallin, Kovno and Riga to form the pro-Soviet Governments and elections were proclaimed for a new Parliament "

The fourth stage ·—

" This mock Parliament decided, on July 21, 1940, to join the Soviets "

And then came the fifth and final stage of the action when the ·

" Bolsheviks had become complete masters of the Balticum. The most cruel terror and persecution was started. Scores of thousands of Baltic patriots, intellectuals, government officials, officers, former members of parliaments and governments, priests, home owners, farmers, business men, even farm hands and workers were either killed by the Soviet secret police or deported to Siberia and Central Asia—wives separated from husbands and children from their parents.

"A plan was elaborated to deport in certain periods the bulk of the Baltic population and to settle Russians in the fertile and well-cultivated Baltic region."

On April 28, the Polish Government, in reply to the Soviet Note of April 25, issued a new Statement showing its good-will towards Russia and once again asked, in the name of " elementary humanity " for a release of its citizens. Issuing this Statement, the Polish Government was aware that, although Russia had broken with Poland, the Allies still had to maintain their Alliance with the Soviets.

" The Polish Government affirm that their policy, aiming at a friendly understanding between Poland and Soviet Russia on the basis of the integrity and full sovereignty of the Polish Republic, was, and continues to be, fully supported by the Polish nation.

" Conscious of their responsibility towards their own nation and towards the Allies, whose unity and solidarity the Polish Government consider to be the cornerstone of future victory, they were the first to approach the Soviet Government with a proposal for a common understanding, in spite of the many tragic events which had taken place from the moment of the entry of the Soviet armies on the territory of the Republic, i.e., September 17, 1939.

" Having regulated their relations with Soviet Russia by the agreement of July 30, 1941, and by the understanding of December 4, 1941, the Polish Government have scrupulously discharged their obligations.

"Acting in close union with their Government, the Polish people, making the extreme sacrifice, fight implacably in Poland and outside the frontiers of their country against the German invader. No traitor Quisling has sprung from the Polish ranks. All collaboration with the Germans has been scorned.

" In the light of facts known throughout the world, the Polish Government and Polish nation have no need to defend themselves from any suggestion of contact or understanding with Hitler.

" In a public statement of April 17, 1943, the Polish Government categorically denied to Germany the right to abuse the tragedy of Polish

officers for her own perfidious schemes. They unhesitatingly denounce Nazi propaganda designed to create mistrust between Allies. About the same time a Note was sent to the Soviet Ambassador accredited to the Polish Government, asking once again for information which would help to elucidate the fate of the missing officers.

" The Polish Government and people look to the future They appeal in the name of the solidarity of the United Nations and elementary humanity for the release from the U.S.S.R. of the thousands of families of Polish armed forces engaged in the fight, or preparing in Great Britain and the Middle East to take their part in the fight—tens of thousands of Polish orphans and children, for the education of whom they would take full responsibility, and who now, in view of the German mass slaughter, are particularly precious to the Polish people.

" The Polish Army in waging the war against Germany will also require for reinforcement all able-bodied Poles, who are now on Soviet soil, and the Polish Government appeal for their release. They reserve their right to plead the cause of all these persons to the world. In conclusion, the Polish Government ask for the continuation of relief welfare for the mass of Polish citizens who will remain in the U.S.S R.

" In defending the integrity of the Polish Republic which accepted the war with the Third Reich, the Polish Government never claimed and do not claim, in accordance with their statement of February 25, 1943, any Soviet territories.

" It is and will be the duty of every Polish Government to defend the rights of Poland and of Polish citizens. The principles for which the United Nations are fighting and also the making of all efforts for strengthening their solidarity in this struggle against the common enemy, will remain the unchanging basis of the policy of the Polish Government."

On April 29, the Polish Ambassador, Romer (accompanied to the station by the British and Turkish Ambassadors) left Moscow for Kuibyshev and Persia. There was the deepest despair among those Poles who had to remain in the Soviet Union, knowing there was no help for them, knowing they must perish. Yet some of them, when saying farewell to the departing Ambassador, sent the last message, " equal to those once given by the Spartans at Thermopylae." " Let our brethren in Great Britain know that, if it is necessary to sacrifice us for the sake of our country, we are willing to make this sacrifice."

On May 4, when Ambassador Romer left the Soviet Union, Premier Sikorski gave a broadcast account of the situation to Poland on the same day, stressing the Polish achievements in the relentless struggle against the German invader.

" Even the revelations " Sikorski said " concerning the sinister tragedy of our colleagues at Smolensk, have failed to alter the implacable stand of the nation . . . All persecution has failed to break the Poles so far . . . The nation has suffered up to fifteen per cent. casualties in this war. Those suffered by the Polish armed forces in foreign countries no less. It will suffice if I say that we have lost in pilots and air crews more than one thousand two hundred airmen . . .

" It is not without importance for the outcome of this war how a population of more than thirty million, even without tanks and planes, will behave in the rear of the enemy, engaged in hard battle in the East.

" Wars are not won with the help of guns, tanks and planes alone, and a war may be lost even if all these powerful weapons are available in sufficient quantities.

" Therefore, we say to the world . do not take Polish resistance lightly , treat our nation as it deserves to be treated . . .

" . . . No one can reproach us if, after having accepted all alone the challenge of the whole military might of Germany, staking the entire heritage of a thousand years of our history in defence of the integrity, sovereignty and honour of the Polish nation, we do not want to sacrifice the same values in favour of one of our Allies. We believe that our martyrology and our struggle for the common cause will spare us untimely reproaches and render impossible the putting forward of claims to our lands, so painfully redeemed in blood.

" . . . One of the main guiding principles of the Polish Government and nation has always been and will continue to be, to secure friendly relations with Russia. That is why the facts separating us must be removed as soon as possible. We expect the Soviet authorities to let the tens of thousands of members of Polish soldiers' families leave the U.S S.R. as soon as possible, together with tens of thousands of Polish children and orphans We also ask for the release of men fit to carry arms and for the continuation of the welfare and relief work for Polish citizens in Russia, deported after 1939, until they are able to return to their homes in Poland. These are not problems which affect Allied unity. But there are limits to concessions beyond which no Pole will go."

On the very same day, May 4, 1943, when every cinema in the U S.A was presenting the film ' Mission to Moscow,' which endeavoured to convince its audience that " any crime is a virtue when committed by the Kremlin "—on that May 4, Stalin, replying to the correspondent of the London *Times* and *New York Times* once more gave an assurance that the

" Government of the U.S S R., desire to see a strong and independent Poland after the defeat of Hitlerite Germany " and that relations between Poland and the U.S.S.R. after the war " should be based upon the fundamentals of solid good-neighbourly relations and mutual respect, or, *should the Polish people so desire*, upon the fundamentals of an alliance providing for mutual assistance against the Germans, as the chief enemies of the Soviet Union and Poland."

Read through Western eyes, Stalin's letter seemed friendly enough to the Polish cause, but it was written by a pen imbued with the spirit of a different world, where the words so often have entirely different interpretations. To the Poles, accustomed to Russian oriental phraseology, this letter only augmented the existing anxiety. Stalin, while in the act of severing relations with the Polish Government, was emphasising yet again that the Soviets wished a ' strong and independent Poland.' In the Russian text of Stalin's letter to the correspondent, Mr. Parker, the term *sojuz* was used. This can mean both ' alliance ' and ' union ' in the Russian language, although to the Westerner a vast difference lies between these two words It was to be anticipated that, at some future date in the relations between Russia and Poland—if the " Polish people so desire " (and this ' desire ' had already been forestalled by the Kremlin's

formation of the 'Union of Polish Patriots' in Moscow), this essential difference would disappear

The Polish Premier, Sikorski, at once answered Stalin's letter, but he could not conceal his doubts :

"The Polish nations wants, of course, to continue its friendly relations with Soviet Russia and base them on an alliance directed against Germany. It is, however, difficult for me not to be restrained, even in face of such a favourable declaration by Premier Stalin, at the very moment when the Polish Ambassador has left Russia and the masses of Polish population in the U.S.S R are left without the care and assistance of their Government.

"Yet, in spite of this, and in spite of many other facts, the Polish Government is ready to give a positive answer to any Soviet initiative which will coincide with the interests of the Polish Republic as defined in our common Declaration of December 4, 1941, and in my speech of May 4, 1943"

Stalin's letter did not change the Soviet policy one iota, it was obviously a diverting move; "we do not break with Poland, but only with the Sikorski Government—we want a 'sojuz' with Poland." The day following Stalin's letter, on May 6, Andrey Vyshinsky, Assistant People's Commissar for Foreign Affairs, made a long statement to the representatives of the British and American press in Moscow which, as *The Times* diplomatic correspondent remarked "was read with much surprise and regret by most people in London." *The Spectator* described it clearly as a "provocation" *The Scotsman* observed that: "The Polish Government and the Polish people have no need to defend themselves from any suggestion of contact or understanding with Hitler. The Soviet Government made that charge in an attempt to discredit the Poles, it comes back in the light of history upon themselves"

London's correspondent of the *New York Times*, Danniel, went even further, writing: "The statement by A V. Vyshinsky, Soviet Vice-Commissar of Foreign Affairs, came as a slap in the face to those in the Polish Government in exile here, who thought they saw in Premier Stalin's recent declaration . and Polish Premier W. Sikorski's courteous retort, a basis for the resumption of Russo-Polish relations"

In his statement on May 6, 1943, Vyshinsky declared that it was "the present Polish Government under the influence of pro-Hitlerite elements within it who had provoked the decision of the Soviet Government to suspend relations with the Polish Government." "The Polish Army," he asserted, "had left Russia because the Polish Government formally refused to despatch its troops to the Soviet-German front." He stated that "all allegations that the Soviet authorities hindered or hinder the departure from the U S.S.R. of Polish subjects, whose number in fact is not great,* and also of the families of Polish military who left the Soviet Union, are false."

* *War and Working Class* on October 24th, 1943, in opposition to this statement declared that the "Polish Government does not represent the *masses* of Poles . . . in Russia." Thus the Soviet paper agreed with the Polish Government's conviction that there were indeed *masses* of Poles in Russia, and not as Vyshinsky had

Vyshinsky finally accused the Polish representatives in the relief organisations of espionage. Those people had already been challenged by the N.K.V.D. with " spying on behalf of one of the Allies," but now, for the first time, the ' Polish spies ' in Russia were given another ' boss,' in this statement, namely, Germany . . . " It has transpired " said Vyshinsky, " that the Polish representatives in certain localities, and a number of the members of their staff and delegates . . have chosen the path of activities in espionage hostile to the U S S.R." The persons guilty of these offences were arraigned for the trial which was to " establish that the local representatives of the Embassy had conducted their espionage under cover of alleged charitable activities . . . and that the principle organisers of these criminal activities hostile to the Soviet Union . . . were certain members of the diplomatic staff of the Embassy "

Beside these ' spies ' who were " exposed and expelled " from the U.S.S.R., other representatives of the Embassy were also accused of having participated in criminal activities. According to Vyshinsky: " the overwhelming majority of the . . . members of the Polish Embassy . . . in addition to espionage activities were engaged in . . . circulation of all kinds of slanderous rumours and fabrications hostile to the Soviet Union . . . In court the overwhelming majority of these persons . . . gave detailed evidence elucidating the essence and methods of these activities."

Apart from these numerous accusations, there was something new in Vyshinsky's statement regarding the deported Polish citizens in Russia, namely, that " the Polish families who were in the Soviet Union *had been evacuated* from areas occupied by the German invaders," but he did not mention the fact that these particular ' evacuations ' had been carried out in 1939 and 1940 and, therefore, at the time when the Russian-German collaboration was in full bloom. The employment of the term ' evacuee ' for these deported people was, in any case, a recognition that they had been compulsorily taken to the Soviet Union, since the Russian press had until then referred to these people in general as ' volunteers '

To Moscow there was nothing extraordinary in Vyshinsky's statement. Many such had been issued by the same Vyshinsky. In 1938, at the Bukharin and his colleagues' trial, the British Government—in absentia, of course—had also been accused in the dock of blackmailing Rakovsky, the Soviet Ambassador in London. As was usual in Moscow, every defendant had pleaded guilty, and Rakovsky (one of the three out of the twenty-one accused who was not shot), questioned by Vyshinsky, enlarged

previously stated : " not a great number." The formation of an Army Corps composed from Poles was also later to belie this statement of Vyshinsky's.

On April 13th, 1943, Moscow's Kosciuszko radio station stated that there were " two million Poles in the Soviet Union " It is difficult to quote the exact number since the only more or less authentic list showing about 1,500,000, was from the last war. The figures according to the latest Soviet census in 1939, had been over 500,000 and Moscow radio station, by giving this figure of two million was revealing an increase in the number of deportees.

upon his contacts with the Intelligence Service through the medium of Lady Paget, Mr. Alexander (later First Lord of the Admiralty), Leckard, Armstrong, and so forth *

The Polish Minister of Foreign Affairs replied to Vyshinsky's accusation with great restraint, merely stating: "any insinuation that the higher military officers or civil servants of the Polish Republic had acted in Germany's favour is so fantastic that he had no intention of answering it. Moreover, the charge of having engaged in intelligence work on behalf of one of the Allied States, repeatedly made by the Soviet authorities against Embassy delegates, was not only unfounded but . . . inconceivable to him."

There was regret on the part of the Polish and Allied Governments, while more and more charges were levelled by Soviet propaganda. A great campaign against Poland had been launched by the Russians with the aim of isolating her and augmenting the powerful pro-Russian current of public opinion in the countries of the Allies and directing it into channels unsympathetic towards the Polish cause. During this time, inside Russia itself, the Polish Department of the Comintern was pushing its puppet, the 'Union of Polish Patriots' more and more to the fore.† This 'Union' with each passing day usurped fresh attributes of Polish sovereignty towards the Poles still detained in the U.S.S.R., preparing the world to one day receive the news of this 'friendly Polish Government' which would spring into being in Moscow, and, with the assistance of the Soviets and by armed force, be prepared to conquer the future Poland—the seventeenth Republic of the Soviet Union.

The Katyn discovery, fanned by German propaganda and continually dwelt on by the press and radio throughout Europe, could not but make a deep impression on the countrymen of those unfortunate warriors who had met their death in such a dreadful manner. The Polish people were greatly shocked and that section consisting of the six million Poles in the U.S.A. who could speak freely, expressed the greatest anxiety and fear regarding the fate of those Poles still in the Soviet Union. America was flooded with horrifying news regarding these exiles—the public were convinced that if these unfortunate people had not already died then they would soon do so from starvation.

* The minutes of the Bukharin trial were published by the Soviet Commissariat of Justice in English, *Report of Court Proceedings in the Case of the Anti-Soviet "Bloc of Rights and Trotskyites," Moscow*, 1938, see pp. 303-305, 507.

† The Comintern was officially dissolved a few weeks later, after the severance of Polish-Russian diplomatic relations. Stalin, in his letter on May 28th to the Moscow correspondent of Reuter's Agency, Mr. King, observed: "the dissolving of the Comintern was a proper action to demarche the Hitlerite lies that Moscow intended to intervene in the life of other States and bolshevize them. These lies have now ended."

The Communist Internationale changed its name to *War and the Working Class* (Woyna i Rabochyj Klass).

The American Poles began a campaign in the Press under the slogan " release the first soldiers in the war, the most faithful of our allies from Soviet hell ! " and sent requests to President Roosevelt and to Congress. Bishop Gawlina's statement, after his visit to the Soviet Union, that 200,000 Polish children had already died from starvation in that country and that an equal number were condemned to death, made a deep impression throughout the world.

The Polish people received many words of comfort from British and American representatives during those days of tension. The British Government took the opportunity, on May 3, the Polish National Feast, of sending a message to the Polish Premier on behalf of His Majesty's Government and the British people, assuring him that the heavy sacrifices of the Polish people " will be crowned by the restoration of a great and independent Poland," and that one of the war-aims of the British policy was to see that country "great and independent."

Sir John Anderson, in his speech on behalf of the British War Cabinet, at the meeting held in commemoration of the Polish National Day emphasised—

" We have been happy to welcome to these shores those Polish leaders and Polish soldiers who came here seeking one thing only, a friendly land from which to continue the fight . . . We remember with gratitude," he said, " the part which Polish airmen, equipped with British aircraft, played in the Battle of Britain, one of the decisive battles of the world . . . There is a specially close relationship between this country and Poland, forged in adversity during the dark years when Hitler seemed to be carrying all before him in Europe. Poland has been to us a loyal and faithful Ally . . Poland's greatness and prosperity shall be restored."

On April 19, the American Congress unanimously voted for a two-hour debate to take place on May 3 " with the aim of discussing Polish affairs on the Day of the National Feast of our sister Polish Republic." Speaker Sam Rayburn (Democrat) opened the debate. He addressed the Polish people :—

" We salute you, because you stood unshaken when all others had bowed down before the apparition of war You were the first to discard all compromise. Three times before have you rescued Europe,* and now once again Christian civilisation has found its first and faithful defender in the Polish people. We salute you for those eight months of time to re-arm which you gave to the world. Had it not been for those eight months, the Second Great War would have been lost, and slavery would have ruled over the world. We salute you, for not one of your sons have extended their hands to the foe. We salute you, because in this war for your own existence you have given your help and love to millions of Jews condemned to slaughter behind the awful walls of the ghettos.

" We salute you for your immortal love of freedom, a love which has incensed the other nations to defend their freedom."

* Sam Rayburn was referring to 1241, when Poland had arrested the Mongol advance in the battle of Szydlov and Lignica , in 1683, when Ian III Sobieski had rescued Vienna by defeating the Turks , and 1920, when the Communist invasion had been halted at the gates of Warsaw.

During this period a section of the British Press was expressing their dissatisfaction with the ' unreasonable ' Polish Government, who was ' provoking the Soviet's anger,' and when they were attacking the figures of their imagination whom they termed the ' Polish Quislings ' in London Yet at the same time Lord Halifax, the man who had signed the Anglo-Polish Treaty in 1939 for Britain, and who, as it was to be observed, did not follow the fluctuations of Churchill's Government on this matter, was speaking according to the letter and spirit of the Treaty. On May 9, in Chicago, he said :

" When the mechanised might of Germany by land and air was hurled on Poland, Polish military power went down before the overwhelming weight There was but little that we were able to do, but we had given Poland our word. We did not go back on it then and we are not going back on it now.

" To-day, however, there is a Polish Government on British soil, and Poles are fighting side by side with us on land and sea and in the air. The time will surely come when Poland will again take her rightful place among the free nations of the world. That is not merely an act of justice we owe to Poland. It is also a duty we owe to the cause of peace. We can hope for no secure or settled peace until Poland has been reborn."

THE POWERS OF DARKNESS

If the sequence of events unfolds as the Communists anticipate, and if their plans are eventually carried into successful execution, the world, or most of the world will indeed attain political unity before the close of the present century.

(Schuman, F. L, "*International Politics*," 1933, p. 841).

For two years there was no doubt in our minds as to how Poland should be restored. When it was occupied by two countries we believed it would be restored, and there is no reason now why we should not go on demanding the restoration of her independence. There has been a change in the last three years, mainly on account of the misleading and false propaganda directed against Poles.

There has been no country so much lied about as Poland—so slandered. There have been no leaders so much abused—why has all that abuse been allowed in this country? Simply because some people in high places stated that if there was any reply made on the part of Poland we might offend Stalin and Molotov. I don't care whether they are offended or not.

(Dollan, P. L., "*The Labour Movement and the Polish Crisis*," Glasgow, October, 1944).

The first Briton to arrive in Russia after she had become one of the members of the Allied camp received a dampening of his enthusiasm on the very threshold of the country. The Soviet Union, isolated for twenty-five years and now, in addition, barred by the fronts of war, was more than ever holding aloof from the world. The Russians treated the newcomers cordially enough, but it was certainly not the treatment consistent with their status as Allies. There was no attempt on the part of the Russians to overcome their ancient distrust of the foreigner, contemptuously referred to over the centuries as 'Latinian,' 'representative of the Rotten West,' and in this era, 'Capitalist' and 'exploiter of the working class.'

It has already been related how the Soviets changed the slogans on their banners when they changed their camp, nevertheless it was not easy to forget that, while they had been with their former ally, they had violated pacts, attacked the weak, blackmailed the occupied countries by holding mock plebiscites, deported the population, shot them by the thousand, shut them up in concentration camps by the hundreds of thousands, and committed monstrous crimes against the Estonians, Lithuanians, Latvians, Rumanians and Poles, to the same extent as their

German ex-partner. Now, against its will, Moscow found itself in the opposite camp, the one which was morally 'clean'—the one which had condemned those crimes The change of slogans was immaterial to the masters of Russia, but the camp which they had joined was the one where the members had entered the war with strictly defined aims, and whose leaders, fortified in a castle of moral values, had proclaimed a war against Nazi insanity, against dictatorship, against 'might before right,' and above all else, against the enslavement of Europe; whose leaders had sworn to restore Poland, had not agreed to the Russian occupation of the Baltic States, and who had even shown a willingness to go to war with that country over the freedom of Finland. These war aims of the United Nations were a well-known and an integral part of their creed. The Allied leaders had repeated them in hundreds of speeches. Their slogans were universal and not only directed against Hitler, but against anyone with similar designs,—liberty for all nations, a return to the Europe which had been overthrown by Hitler But such ideas so solemnly expressed by the leaders of the two Greatest World Powers on August 14, 1941, in the Atlantic Charter, proclaiming the four freedoms for mankind, were entirely foreign to the master of the Kremlin. For the time being the Russian war aims were limited to the continents of Europe and Asia. Primarily defeated in the field, the Kremlin, during the first moments of shock and surprise, had proclaimed its consent to the "basic propositions" as laid down in the Atlantic Charter. But, when signing this adherence in London on September 29, 1941, the Ambassador, Ivan Maisky, on behalf of the Soviet Government had simultaneously added a long Declaration which in some points differed materially from that of the Charter. Thus, from the first moment, the Kremlin clearly presented the particular character of its own war aims which were, not only the preservation, but the territorial expansion of the Soviet system. The Declaration was either careful to omit some of the delicate paragraphs of the Charter, or veiled them in the phraseology usual to Communism. The Kremlin considered itself bound by the ideological thesis of the Atlantic Charter, only so far as it corresponded with its own war aims.

The first and most important article of the Charter, that "their countries (i.e., signatory Powers) seek no aggrandisement, territorial or otherwise," was left out of the Soviet Declaration, simply because the Soviet Union, 'fighting imperialism, expands exclusively by the voluntary adherence of new republics.' Yet in reality the Soviets never at any time considered the question of territorial changes according to "the freely expressed wish of the people concerned," since, to them, 'the wishes of the people' meant solely the wishes of that group of Communists or pro-Russians among those people.*

* A detailed comparison of both documents, the Atlantic Charter and the Soviet Declaration, point by point has been made by Dallin, D. J., in his *Russia and Post-war Europe*, pp. 134-143.

The situation on the Russian front at the end of 1941 had grown so serious that Moscow, together with the other twenty-five States, signed the Washington Declaration, thereby confirming (this time without restriction) the edicts of the Atlantic Charter. Only when Molotov signed the Pact with Great Britain on May 26, 1942 (wherein the partners had given the assurance that they would not endeavour to increase their territory nor intervene in the internal affairs of any other State), did he emphasise that the Soviet Empire was the Empire of 1941, i.e., including the territories Russia had occupied by her Agreement with Germany. It can be deduced that the British statesmen, in hastily placing their signatures to this Pact, did not fully realise the dangerous potentialities of the Russian ruling circles, and did not anticipate that future Russian territorial demands would be executed on the basis of the ' desire ' of the population in the countries concerned. And, moreover, that once in Russian hands, those countries would, through the medium of the N.K.V.D. and the Soviet-organised plebiscites, be practically one hundred per cent. ' unanimous ' in expressing this ' desire.'

The Kremlin knew from the beginning that its war-aims would prove incompatible to those of its other Allies. In the early months of 1942, Moscow began to take the first steps in order to persuade her partners to modify those intentions so solemnly expressed in the Atlantic Charter or rather, to adopt instead the Soviet interpretation of them. To comply with this, the Allies would have to refrain from any mention of the integrity and restoration of certain states and discuss the fate of only that part of Europe which the Kremlin was willing to discuss . . . Instead, they would have to listen to the talk of changes which should be made in the governmental systems of ' liberated ' nations, rectification of frontiers by the will of the strongest Powers, spheres of influence, oil, access to the sea for these great Powers, slave-labour after the war and compensation for the big states at the expense of the weaker allies. They would have to consent to the same method of bargaining in discussions as had been used in the negotiations between Russia and Germany from the Spring of 1939, they would be forced to descend from the realms of idealism and to talk in the blunt language of ' real politics,' in the language of ' cash terms '

Great Britain had begun the war against Germany standing by her policy of opposing any Power who was endeavouring to obtain hegemony of the Continent. It was a policy which corresponded advantageously with the interests of the peoples of Europe, and Great Britain, in not fighting for herself alone, could justly claim that she had joined the war on ideological grounds. For the succeeding years, therefore, she was in a position to proclaim the moral reasons for her participation in the struggle. A fact which, however, was of little interest to the Kremlin. Indeed, the speeches of the Russian statesmen after signing the Pact with

Germany in 1939, had clearly indicated a contempt for these ideological reasons. Moscow, endangered for a time in 1941, had employed the slogans of the Allies, but when that danger passed after the victory of Stalingrad, the Russians commenced, simultaneously with an offensive in the field, a diplomatic offensive against the Allies. Demanding supplies and organising a campaign for the opening of a 'Second Front,' the Kremlin attempted to define its future sphere of influence and to conduct an independent political action within that sphere in order to change the system of governments and frontiers to correspond with its coming plans for the annexation of that territory.

It was soon to become evident in the winter of 1943 that the Kremlin was beginning to take over Hitler's political programme for the Continent of Europe. The means and weapons employed by Stalin were much more powerful and far-reaching than those used by Hitler. The Soviet diplomatic action was accompanied by a propaganda campaign in the Allied countries who, unlike Russia, were even during the war, open to receive such propaganda. The Soviet main action, however, was directed towards taking over the already existing resistance movements operating in those countries occupied by the Germans, the resistance movements which recognised British leadership in the war and were based on the British supplies. To all of them, from Greece to Norway and from France to Poland, the Soviet Union had been Germany's collaborator during the first and darkest years of the war, therefore it was improbable to expect that Russia would be able to destroy their link with Britain and subordinate them herself. But nevertheless the Soviets tried, and to this end either formed their own Communist resistance movements in certain of those countries, or at least claimed that such a movement was existing. At any rate, they instigated a war between the national resistance movement already created and those 'partisans' controlled by them. An action which, according to Russian calculation, seemed more profitable to the Soviet Union than the fight of a concentrated and united underground movement of Europe against Germany. Thus in the 'Underground' was staged the first act of the Soviets' struggle for Europe against the Allies.

It has already been related how Tsardom had a strict and elaborate method of conquest unsurpassed by any other imperialist Power in the history of mankind. In Stalin's application of this method, however, there was something new, something which placed him on a high plane among the Russian leaders and among the world strategists of imperialism, namely, that he was employing this method in the camp of which he was a member and, moreover, when a war was in progress. Thus Stalin was proclaiming one of his allies as his enemy and by classifying him as one of Hitler's vassals, for whom "pity should not exist," was justifying thereby his extermination and liquidation of this same Ally.

In order to understand how this method was applied under the specific conditions of the Second Great War, it is necessary to recall Moscow's ancient methods of conquest. Russia's policy towards her next victim, i.e., her neighbour, invariably followed the same sequence of events :— the invention of a claim to the borderland and the search for any discontented element in that country to serve her ends Next, the creation of the means whereby they (Moscow) could intervene in the internal life of the country under the slogans ' help for the oppressed,' for ' justice and freedom.' Then the invasion, aggression and extermination of the leader element, and the deportation of a great percentage of the inhabitants. Finally, the complete incorporation and russification of the country with a close binding to the central authority—Moscow. Thus, in a short space of time, there would be no trace of the nation so overwhelmed by this assistance from Russia.

Eastern Poland had already gone through various stages of this Russian programme but, owing to the German invasion and subsequent Russian withdrawal, it had not been completed So Moscow had to begin the task again from the first item. They manufactured a number of claims which were to cover the annexation of Eastern Poland—racial, humane, self-determination of the population, and strategic ones, but none of these seemed sufficient to embrace the incorporation of Poland as a whole into the U.S.S.R. However, after the ' election ' experiment in the Baltic States and Eastern Poland, the Kremlin had decided that it might be possible to invent a plausible title to this country. In fact Stalin, in his letter to the Moscow correspondent of *The Times* on May 4, 1943, gave a clear indication of his intention to establish such a claim. To the correspondent's question " on what fundamentals, in your opinion, should the relation between Poland and the U.S S.R. be based after the war ? " Stalin had replied : " . . . solid neighbourly relations . . . or, should the Polish people so desire, upon the fundamentals of an alliance."

The world had already been given amazing figures which represented the number of people who had ' so desired ' the Communist order in the Baltic States and Eastern Poland and who had ' requested ' to be incorporated into the Soviet Union. The N.K.V.D. was able to produce this ' desire ' in a masterly fashion in the occupied countries. The powerful apparatus of Moscow propaganda through its Polish Department of the ex-Comintern, and by its method of promoting obscure individuals as eminent citizens, would have no difficulty in announcing to the world at large that the ' genuine voice of Poland ' had expressed this or that desire beneficial to the interests of the Soviet Union.

Thus did the Kremlin begin to carry out its moral conquest of the opponent In comparison with Hitler's methods, there was a tremendous progress in the development of psychological warfare in this domain. In 1938-1939, the latter had limited his action to two main factors—diplo-

matic pressure through the medium of a third Power interested in safeguarding peace (Western Democracies, in the case of Czecho-Slovakia and Poland), and the action of the Fifth Column exclusively based on the work of German inhabitants in the countries he was about to attack.

Russia's activities were more complex, and she tried her utmost to get the backing of at least one section of the Polish people who would be prepared to execute her plans. This task proved hopeless at the time, but Moscow persistently tried to achieve its goal by using the same methods which the N.K.V.D. had employed during the 'elections' in Eastern Poland, and to bend the will of the population to their design, although this population was then as yet still under German rule.

It was a most remarkable and extraordinary undertaking which has no precedent in the records of history. Such an undertaking could only be born in the minds of men who had been studying the phenomenon of revolution for years, not for pleasure, but for practical purposes, namely, how to achieve a revolution in their own and other countries. If the scheme to influence and break the will of people, who were under the heel of another rival conqueror at the time, appeared to give little result, some advantage would, nevertheless, have been gained by the time this rival was defeated, for at any rate the ground-work of a civil war would have been laid Therefore, after the severance of Polish-Russian diplomatic relations, the attack was launched on a large scale. The preparations were carried out along three lines :—firstly, by the creation in Moscow of a substitute Polish Government on Russian soil, embodied in the 'Union of the Polish Patriots,' and secondly, by the formation of a centre of Russian influence inside Poland itself by the restoration of the Polish Communist Party (dissolved by Moscow in 1937) under another name, and the endeavour to develop it as a competitor to the existing Polish Underground authorities. Thirdly, the Kremlin intended to isolate the Polish Government, to eject it from the circle of the United Nations and cut it off from the Polish people and, by this action compel the United Nations to resign from their commitments towards Poland and leave her entirely at the mercy of Moscow. Its diplomatic action in this direction was supported by propaganda (in which their enormous funds played no small part), on an extensive scale.

In 1927, one of the delegates of the American Trade Union in Moscow had asked Stalin whether there was any truth in the story that Russia was sending a great deal of money to the Communist Party in America. Stalin had denied this statement. From the early days of 1942, Soviet propaganda in the countries of the United Nations and in occupied Europe was conducted on such a lavish scale, however, that, had this same question then been put to Stalin, he would no doubt have let it pass unanswered.

In point of fact, the financial position of the Soviets from their entry

into the war had been favourable in comparison with the circumstances of the other countries. There was no question of payment for the enormous deliveries of goods of every kind, war materials and food from the U.S.A. and from Great Britain . . Moreover, Russia was able to employ hundreds of thousands of convicts who, day and night, extracted gold and other precious metals from the Urals and mountains of Asia. Since these metals were not used for any domestic purposes whatsoever in Russia, the Kremlin had gold in large quantities at its disposal for all uses abroad. The influence of this money could easily be observed. Nothing proved too expensive for the Soviet propaganda apparatus. Some of the best authors, film producers, artists and journalists among the United Nations were harnessed to the Soviet wagon, not only to glorify the real war effort of the Russian people, but also to applaud the tyranny of the Red Tsar. They were used as the medium to heap slander upon the other Allies whose territories Russian imperialists intended to annex.

Paid by Catherine the Second, Voltaire had lauded her partition of the Polish Commonwealth, and now, once again, a clan of paid intellectuals in the countries of the United Nations were, under the cloak of ' true democrats,' conniving with the Russian's destruction of the flower of democracy, the Baltic States and the Polish Republic

In 1939, Great Britain had been prepared to send her troops to Finland and fight Russia — in 1944, the same Great Britain regarded her commitments towards the smaller European nations from an entirely different point of view. How much of this should be credited to Great Britain's change of policy, and how much to the Russian war achievements and to their propaganda machine? It was illuminating to observe that, during the period of great Allied effort on the seas, which resulted in the annihilation of the German Fleet and the conquering of the submarine menace; the equally great achievements in the destruction of the Italian Army and subsequent re-conquest of the Mediterranean, the systematic air-warfare waged against Germany, and the efficient material support to Russia, without which she would have been unable to equal the Germans in armaments, all this Allied progress and great war-effort passed unremarked by the people of the Soviets The United Nations' propaganda was indeed unable to penetrate to the Russian masses, but the people in Britain and the U S. came under the continual bombardment of Russian propaganda which did its utmost to convince them that, in point of fact, the unique effort in the war had been made by the Russians and, in comparison with this effort, the work of the Allies was but a very minor detail. ' Russia,' this propaganda concluded, ' should be recompensed for her extraordinary task ' This slogan was to be adopted after a few years by the British Government,—a remarkable achievement of Russian diplomacy.

THE SOVIET'S "UNION OF POLISH PATRIOTS"

. . . The castle be so built, and fortified, that it was thought to be invincible. And when it was finished, for reward to the architect (that was a Polonian), he (Tsar Ivan Vasilevich) put out both his eyes, to make him unable to build the like again.

(Fletcher, G., *ibid.*, p. 63)

Immediately after the occupation of Poland, the N.K.V.D. began to seek among the population for persons who might be of some use to them, agents who would be capable of carrying out intelligence work in that part of Poland occupied by Germany, and for informers who would act in Eastern Poland against the national underground organisations. In 1939, the Soviets had no particular need to find any Quislings among the Poles, for they were anticipating that the Polish question on the annexed territory would be settled in the way normal to Russia, that is, by the physical extermination of all leaders and the wholesale transfer of the population. In that case common informers would suffice for the job.

The former stock of Polish Communists who had linked their fate with that of Lenin and Trotsky and who, believing in the Revolution, had marched with the Russian armies in their drive on Warsaw in 1920, were already dead, the majority having shared the destiny of their erstwhile comrades and perished during the purges—many had been executed as *agents provocateurs*. No one has been able to find the graves of Wojewódzki, Skarbek, Dąbal, Warski, Lenski and other Poles, nor of Ukrainians such as Czubar, Skrypnik and those White Ruthenian dreamers, who sincerely believed in a better world founded on Communism, and were so unheeding as to join the Russian camp and seek refuge in the Soviet Union.

The actual Polish Department of the Comintern was staffed from an Academy created in Minsk on the borders of the Polish Republic, where personnel were specially trained for their task. The students took a three-year course in order to become thoroughly acquainted with Polish affairs. Some of the pupils were young men of Polish stock, educated from childhood in Russian schools. A number of these, as minor officials of the N.K.V.D., were later to come into contact with the Polish Army in the U.S.S.R.

The existing Polish Department of the Comintern, possessed an experienced staff and had no need, as had been the case in Lenin's time, to seek for supporters in Poland who would work against their country. If they adopted Wanda Wasilewska, it was only as a special case and because, in the future she, as a writer, could perform useful work in Western Poland occupied by the Germans. Furthermore, her virtue lay in the fact that she happened to be the daughter of the late Leon Wasilewski,

an eminent socialist and writer and the first Minister of Foreign Affairs in Poland, and Chairman of the Polish-Soviet Frontier Commission which had drawn up the Soviet-Polish frontier line on the basis of the Treaty of Riga. In Poland, Wanda Wasilewska had been a member of the Polish Socialist Party (her father's), the Party most hated and fought against by the Communists. At the time of the Soviet occupation of Eastern Poland, Wasilewska had been in Lwów. She was 'elected' to the Supreme Council of the U.S.S.R., and later nominated a Colonel of the Red Army.*

During the first months of the Soviet-Polish 'friendship' in 1941, when the Kremlin anticipated arriving at a complete understanding with Sikorski, the Comintern had considerably limited its propaganda action against Poland and merely used the radio as a medium to urge the Poles to strike at the Germans. In the thirties Moscow had completely and for all time finished with Polish Communism, and its 'megalomania to be independent.' And now, when Moscow was trying to become more Polish than the Poles themselves, and trying to indicate to them their road of patriotism and civic duties, some antecedent had to be found or, at any rate invented. With this object in view, Moscow dug up the 'Polish Communists' from the archives, referring to them as the 'patriots' who had also defended Warsaw against the Germans, and the Soviet radio station 'Front' or 'Kosciuszko' on January 13, 1942, broadcast for instance —

"Warsaw (in 1939) was defended by National Democrats and Pilsudskyites, Socialists, Peasants and also Communists . . . war was necessary so that the Communists might show that they are also an essential part of the Polish nation, and the hostile attitude of the Polish parties against them was never justified."

* Wanda Wasilewska was a novelist, though not among the foremost ranks of authors. She had extremely radical ideas, with a great sympathy towards social wrongs and poverty, but with absolutely no understanding of the difficulties which surround all economic problems. She saw life in two colours only, white or black, and painted the characters in her novels accordingly. Some of her works were translated into Russian and printed in the Soviet Union. The Soviets do not recognise the law of property regarding literary works of 'members of capitalist countries,' and consequently had never paid for these translations. Only when Wasilewska became a Soviet citizen and the Soviets decided to exploit her as a propaganda agent, did they give her forty thousand roubles as fees and Stalin's literary prize of one hundred thousand roubles.

Wasilewska's evolution from social radicalism, to shallow official Stalinism (of which she had no real conception and was, in fact, even writing heresy against it in his paper) came as the result of her conviction that the Soviet conception of the Communist paradise was right Her Quisling activities were based, at least in the beginning, on sentimental grounds, but she was now fighting against her father's work, by supporting the Soviet claims to Eastern Poland. Once in Soviet hands she was bound hand and foot, while her renegade activities were completed by her private life. Her second husband was murdered before her eyes in Lwów in October, 1939, by the N.K.V.D., although she declared that the murderers were Ukrainians Her third husband, taken immediately afterwards, was Korneichuk, a Soviet playwright and afterwards a Deputy Foreign Commissar of the U.S.S.R. Wasilewska's name was exploited to the utmost by Soviet propaganda in 1943. But the articles, especially those appearing under her name in the Russian press, did not appear to have been written by her pen.

It has already been related how the Polish Communist Party had been wiped from the face of the earth by the will of Moscow in 1937 (see Vol. 1, p. 105), and how all the Polish Communists who had stayed in Russia had been shot sooner or later; it has also been recounted how any Russian Communist who found himself on Polish territory during the war of 1939 received orders to sabotage the 'imperialist war.' Anyone fighting against the German forces in Poland had then, according to Moscow, been an agent of the 'international capitalists and imperialists.' When, on September 17, the Communist Red Army stabbed the Polish Forces in the back, the same 'agent' was now termed a 'traitor of the people.' The Soviet's 'Kosciuszko' radio station, in spite of this, had had the effrontery to discuss the topic of the Communists who had 'defended Warsaw' against the Germans. The Kremlin was to revert to the slogans of 'patriotism' in its propaganda when it realised that there was no suitable element in Poland from which to form the nucleus of a Communist organisation for their future action, and when, after the lightning and unexpected retreat from that country in 1941, they had been in desperate need of a tool to serve their purpose.

The Soviets invariably considered an action in the rear of the enemy to be a vital factor of the war in any country they were attacking When, therefore, it became clear that Sikorski and the Polish Army in the U.S.S R. would not be of any value in such an action, the Kremlin had to forge a more suitable weapon for itself. So, at the end of February, 1943, the Soviet Government, who permitted of no foreign organisation on its territory (who refused to sanction even a club for the foreign correspondents), and who did not allow any Soviet organisation, even the Russian Red Cross, to have contact with any similar institution abroad, discovered and boosted up the independent 'Union of the Polish Patriots.' It was not long before the Soviet radio was claiming that this 'Union' expressed 'the genuine opinion of the Polish people.' Since no organisation could exist in Russia, independent of the Communist Party, it must, in fact, have been some off-spring of that same Party. There were two remarkable and contradictory features regarding the formation of this body. Firstly, according to the Soviet's own statement, it was composed of 'Polish citizens,' yet under the 'law' proclaimed by the same Soviets on November 29, 1939, all 'former' Polish subjects residing in Russia had become Russian citizens. After the Treaty of July, 1941, they resurrected these Poles, only to re-bury them once more on December 1, 1941, all of those at any rate of non-Polish blood. The Soviets in this case applied Hitler's racial law or rather admitted the rule of Tsarist bureaucracy, that only a Catholic could be a Pole and, even then, he must prove he had Polish ancestors. Under the Soviet Note of January 16, 1943, however, even those who could prove they were Poles had once again been forcibly re-made into Russian citizens. Yet the Kremlin had been able to produce 'Polish citizens' to form its 'Union of Polish

Patriots,' which was not only composed from Poles who were Catholics, but even of Poles who were Hebrews Wasilewska, a voluntary Russian citizen and a member of the Supreme Council of the U S S.R., and the Soviet General Berling,* also a Russian official, were nominated as leaders of the ' Union.'

A second remarkable fact regarding this ' Union ' was that the Poles composing it had been discovered in Moscow, a city where only those people who were necessary for vital war work were allowed to live, but certainly no Polish deportees. How strictly this rule was observed can be judged from one Polish M.P. (the late M. Mastek) who, released from the labour camp after the Treaty of 1941, was brought to the head office in Moscow under the armed escort of the N K V D., the official accompanying him was halted before the capital since the permit to enter was in the name of the prisoner only.

The Soviet's formation of this ' Union of Polish Patriots ' in Moscow as the nucleus of Russian influence in Poland, was intended to serve as an instrument to disintegrate the Polish people Its Fifth Column activities were to be masked under slogans which would carry some weight on Polish soil. Ultimately, this ' Union ' was to form the substitute, and act as the competitor, to the Polish Government in London.

The creation of similar bodies under the name of ' committees ' or ' governments ' in Moscow has been one of the most characteristic features and a well-tried method of the Red Kremlin from the very beginning of its existence and its fight for power. In 1918, Lenin had created one such ' government ' for Finland. When the Germans were quitting Russia and the Ukraine in 1918-1919, and the Bolsheviks were advancing into the territories of the Polish Republic, they had, in turn, created several such ' governments.' On December 8, 1918, Moscow announced the formation of a ' Provisional Worker-Peasant Revolutionary Government of Lithuania,' although the Bolsheviks had still at the time been far away from that country. The same year on December 31,

* Zygmunt Berling, a retired Lieutenant-Colonel, was a descendent of the German colonists. At the beginning of 1939, he was released from the Polish Army as inefficient. His character revealed a great self-appraisal of his own gifts and qualifications, with the complex that he had never been fully appreciated by his superiors

The Soviet press and radio published a fantastic biography of this Berling, quoting him as an ' eminent scholar ' and the victim of an anti-democratic regime. In actual fact, however, he was indifferent to any political questions and had the reputation of being an exceptional snob. He published a small booklet, *The Officer, and How he should Conduct Himself*, in which he expressed the most ultra anti-democratic opinions in the exaggerated 'old school tie' style of the former Austrian Army. This booklet and its author became the butt of his colleagues' wit and Berling re-called *The Officer* from the booksellers.

Guided by his own personal ambitions, Berling transferred his loyalties to the Russian camp. Moscow rewarded his action by appointing him a Soviet General. By the end of 1944, he was sacked and his name no longer heard in Soviet propaganda.

Moscow proclaimed a ' White Ruthenian Republic ' complete with its ' government ' and, at the same time, established a ' Polish government.' Advancing further into Poland, the Russians then created, in Tarnopol, the ' Galizian Revolutionary Committee.' On July 31, 1920, an abortive provisional government was nominated for Poland with Felix Dzierzhinsky (already the powerful head of Czeka), Felix Kon, E. Pruchniak, J. Unschlicht and J Marchlewski, as the chairman.* Similar quasi-governments were created by the Russians for her neighbours, not only for those countries on their western border, but elsewhere, as, for instance, in 1921, in Outer Mongolia. But all these ' governments ' formed in the Russian capital were alien to the countries for which they were predestined, and they never in fact came into being, eventually passing into oblivion without leaving any trace of their existence.

At any rate, Lenin had been fairly certain when he created his competitive governments, supported by the bayonets of the Red Army, that these ' governments ' were the concrete expression of an active revolutionary movement in the countries themselves. Stalin, however, was fully aware that no revolutionary or pro-Soviet feeling existed in those countries west of Russia. Nevertheless, the possibilities connected with the use of such bodies acting through the medium of Soviet propaganda and diplomacy were so great, that Stalin could not resist the temptation of repeating the same tactics. The first, the ' Finnish People's Government ' was formed in 1939, and was composed from Finnish emigrants, with Otto Kuuisinen as the Premier, residing in the Soviet Union This pseudo-Finnish Government immediately concluded an ' agreement ' with Moscow, and ' requested ' the Kremlin for military assistance. The request was wholeheartedly granted and the Russian troops, assisting the ' rightful Government ' (according to Moscow) invaded Finland. Thus, formally, the Soviets were never at war with Finland, but, later on, forgetful of the role played by Kuuisinen, they were to conclude a peace with that country

In 1943, the Kremlin had no group of malcontents in Poland, nor any Party at its disposal, nor in this instance even a single person who might be employed in the role such as Dr. Benes had played in the Czecho-Slovak affair. And, although in 1943 the Kremlin still held about one million Poles in their power, it proved difficult and, as it transpired, impossible to find anyone who would volunteer to be Stalin's candidate for the position of Commissar in a future ' friendly ' Poland

The creation of a competitive Polish-Soviet Government in Moscow seemed to be over-stepping the mark in 1943, when the Kremlin still had to consider the Anglo-Saxon Allies. As experience had shown, none of these ' governments ' formed on Russian soil had proved lucky, neither the Polish Revolutionary Committee of 1920 nor the Finnish

*Marchlewskij, J., *Wojna i mir meshdu Burshuasnoj Polshej i proletarskoj Rassijej. War and Peace between Bourgeois Poland and Proletarian Russia.* Moscow, 1921.

People's Government of 1939, had in the end been transferred to the country they were 'representing' The 1940 'friendly governments' for the remaining Baltic States had been formed in the countries already occupied by the Red Army. In this instance, therefore, the Kremlin reviewed its methods and for the time being refrained from creating its own Polish Government, but substituted as an instrument of pressure a body under the innocent-sounding title of the 'Union of the Polish Patriots.' Although the press-organ of this 'Union,' *Wolna Polska* (Free Poland), made its appearance on March 1, 1943, the names of the members of this body were not announced until several months later. When at length the various identities of the 'Praesidium of Patriots' were disclosed on June 18, in a thanksgiving telegram to Stalin, none of the people named had at any time been connected with real politics, neither did they represent any existing Party or group of the Polish people. They were unknown personalities in Polish life and appeared to be recent converts to the Communist Party or else those people who had been 'invited' by the N.K.V.D. to join the 'Union.' To refuse such an 'invitation' in Russia would have meant death in a labour camp. Among the members of this Praesidium, only a few names could be identified, Jakub Parnas, a professor of biology of the Lwów University, Andrzej Witos (brother of the former Premier and Leader of the Peasant Party), and Drobner from Cracow.*

There was no former Communist among this list of 'patriots' and, officially at least, no member of the Polish Department of the Comintern. Personnel from that Department came into the open and were employed in the next phase of the Soviet action, when Poland was finally occupied by the Red Army. In the meantime, the 'Union of Patriots' was to be the vanguard of the Soviets' propaganda to convince the Allies that there were Poles anxious to subordinate their country to Russia.

The existence of the 'Union of Polish Patriots' was marked by abuse against the Polish Government, published in *Free Poland* and other Soviet papers, and repeated over the radio. When the Moscow correspondent of the *Daily Herald* returned to London after his sojourn in the Russian capital, he wrote a series of questions and answers on topical problems connected with Soviet life. To the question "We are often puzzled by the activities and statements published by the German and Polish Committees in Moscow, what is your personal estimate of their importance?"

*Parnas—a typical scientist He received Stalin's biology prize

Andrzej Witos, owing to his brother's influence, was once a Member of Parliament in the Peasant's Party From 1928-1939, he joined Pilsudski's regime which had been opposed by the Peasant Party. Witos was deported with his family to Russia and unable to leave that country with them, he preferred to stay there. The Soviet press published several articles under his name, although in Poland he had never been known to write.

Drobner, a Cracow chemist was expelled from the Polish Socialist Party in 1937. (See Vol. I, p 264).

he replied: " Both the German and Polish Committees are remarkably shy bodies, and I don't know anyone who has managed to contact them."*

The ' shy body ' of the Polish Committee . . . impossible to locate and quite inaccessible, as indeed was any department of the Comintern to the man-in-the-street, showed a remarkable zeal in its propaganda. Immediately after the severance of the Polish-Russian relations, *Izvestia* published a violent attack in a typical Soviet article, supposedly written by the chairman Colonel Wasilewska, although it was a style she had hitherto never adopted. The whole point of the article lay in its last sentences, in which the supposed authoress stressed a flagrant untruth, namely, that the Polish Government " has forced the Polish soldiers, eager for battle, into inactivity," and furthermore she requested the Soviet Government to allow " the Poles residing in the Soviet Union . . . to fight for (their) homeland, arms in hand, shoulder to shoulder with the Soviet citizens of all nationalities (therefore, as an integral part of the Red Army) and to replace the Polish Army who had been transferred to Iran." This article ended with the sentence which Stalin had used in his reply to the congratulatory telegram received from Herr Ribbentrop on his birthday in 1939. Only here the word ' German ' had been substituted for ' the Polish people.' The sentence ran: " . . . the friendship of the Polish (German) and Soviet peoples, cemented with blood . . . is unshakeable. We know that this friendship will grow."†

The Soviet *Wolna Polska* (*Free Poland*) published a series of articles in which their political programme was shewn to be the same as that of any other democratic country. Every Pole would endorse the statement that nine-tenths of the quoted programme had always been the policy of each successive Polish Government. The Editors declared their wish to see the restoration of Poland as an " independent country that would neither be an instrument nor an object of foreign imperialism." "A Poland strong, as the result of friendly relations with all her Allies," a " democratic, parliamentary and just country," " where all citizens will have equal rights, irrespective of their nationality or religion." The Editors of this paper wanted to give the peasant his own plot of land, completely at variance with the Soviet action already undertaken in the Eastern half of Poland, where masses of peasants had been expelled, and their ' plots of land ' taken for collective farms.

There was no mention in this paper of the Soviet's desire for a Com-

* *Daily Herald*, February 28th, 1944

† This article was re-published in London by the Communist Party of Great Britain in pamphlet form entitled ' The Voice of Free Poland,' price one penny.

It was one example of the support given by the ' British ' Party to the chauvinist claims of the Soviets against Poland.

The amount of articles and radio speeches (not taking into consideration the books) published in the Soviet Union, under the name of Wanda Wasilewska, and interviews and speeches under the name of Berling, exceeded the work of several dozen average journalists.

munist order in Poland, no reference to the incorporation of the latter's Western provinces into the Soviet Union. On the contrary, *Free Poland* expressed the opinion of the average national ' capitalist ' Polish paper, but with a deification (normal to the Soviet Press) of Stalin as a ruler. Writing under the guidance of Soviet mentorship, the Editors of *Free Poland* claimed that they alone, stood for the policy of active resistance to the Germans. The names of great Polish patriots, particularly that of Kosciuszko, were mentioned and continuously quoted in this paper. Simultaneously, the Editors of *Free Poland* accused the ' circle of emigrees and the officials in London ' of being opposed to any active resistance against the German occupation forces in Poland, and finally concluded : " they have no right to speak in the name of Poland."

There was one utterance not unexpected in the claims of this ' Soviet Union of Polish Patriots ' (an utterance which was repeated by the Soviet Russian Press), namely, that they desired a ' democratic ' programme in only one half of Poland, since the other half, according to the ' Union,' should belong to Russia. In other words, these ' Polish Patriots ' were recognising the Ribbentrop-Molotov Line of September 28, 1939, as Poland's Eastern frontier " We do not demand," Wasilewska wrote, " an inch of Ukrainian, White Ruthenian or Lithuanian soil." Exactly the attitude which had been held for so long by the Polish people, who had not asked for Kiev, Minsk or Kaunas, and had considered that the first should belong to a free Ukraine, the second to a free White Ruthenia, and the third to a free Lithuania.

On June 18, 1943, the ' Patriots ' arranged a Congress in Moscow, in which, as the Soviet radio stated, " the Polish workers, peasants and guerillas were taking part." How these ' Polish guerillas ' had been brought into Russia to participate in this Congress, the Moscow radio did not care to explain, but it stated that the object of the Congress " was to mark the unity of the Poles with Soviet Russia and to strengthen relations between the two nations." The ' Congress ' acclaimed the programme which had already been presented in *Wolna Polska* (Free Poland), and expressed the ' demand ' that after the war Poland should receive new territories on the West. The whole of Upper Silesia should be included, and the " mouth of the Vistula, Danzig, must be returned into Polish hands." " East Prussia will never be a bastion of German imperialism, nor will there be a wall separating us from the Baltic. East Prussia must become Poland's outlet to the sea." Three times this Congress repeated in its declaration that the main aim of the ' Union ' " is everlasting friendship between the Polish people and the U S.S.R." and concluded by despatching a thanksgiving telegram to Stalin, who, " in spite of obstacles and the efforts of enemies, together with the Soviet Government, was maintaining friendly relations with those fighting for the freedom of the Polish people and to the restoration, as the outcome of the war, of a free, independent and a strong Poland."

The Congress expressed its gratitude to the Soviet Government and to its Premier for their permission to form a Polish Kosciuszko Division, and gave their pledge that the " Poles in the Soviet Union will carry out their duty as soldiers, fighting alongside the heroic Red Army against the German invader." The Congress also affirmed that it would not allow " any trouble to be created or any wedge to be driven between the Polish people and the Soviet Union." Stalin in reply had declared that " the Soviet Union will do everything . . . to strengthen the Polish-Soviet friendship and to aid with all the means within its power the rebuilding of a strong and independent Poland."

The pronouncements of the ' Patriots ' were similar to those made in July, 1940, before the annexation of Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia by their sovietised Governments, and the phrases regarding friendship with the U.S.S.R. sounded ominously identical. In addition, the Congress in Moscow confirmed that, contrary to the statement of the Kremlin and the ' law ' issued by the Soviets, there were, after all, a number of Polish citizens still in the U.S.S.R.

The publishing of Stalin's telegram to the ' Union of the Polish Patriots ' in the Soviet Press, and the acknowledgment thereby of this new organ of Soviet propaganda, came as a warning. The nucleus of a prospective Soviet Polish Government had now been created. ' Take heed, Polish Government in London and you Allies ! You have your Polish Government, and now we are prepared and, in the matter of a few hours, we can elevate and enthrone our own ! '

As one of its primary aims, the ' Union ' had announced " the organisation of Polish armed forces who, shoulder to shoulder with the Red Army, will fight the Hitlerite Germany " While this was in the act of being acclaimed at the Congress, its members were informed that the Soviet Council of Peoples' Commissars had " acceded to the request made by the Union of Polish Patriots and permitted the formation of a Polish division to bear the name of Kosciuszko " and, furthermore, that it was already in the process of formation. The Soviet authorities had no time to waste, and, in any case, they knew there would be no question but that the Congress would agree on this point.

In December, 1918, the Polish Government in Warsaw had received definite proof that the Bolshevik Government had formed Polish Communist regiments named after the Polish cities such as Warsaw, Sandomierz, etc.—an action which the Polish Government had considered to be particularly unfriendly and aggressive, inasmuch as they believed that these regiments were designed for the invasion of Polish territory and for the purpose of fermenting a social revolution. In his Note of January 7, 1919, the Commissar for Foreign Affairs, Chicherin, had admitted the existence of such units on Soviet territory, and had declared that the names of Polish cities had been assigned these units, a fact of which the " proletariat of these cities was proud."

Later, those regiments were to form the ' West Red Division,' which was among the troops to invade Poland in 1920. They were, indeed, partly Polish, just as in 1943 when the Kremlin commenced to create Polish Divisions on its own account, they were also in the same sense partly Polish. Except for the retired Lieutenant Colonel Berling and a few of his companions who had passed into the Red Army, there was not one Polish officer left in Russia. Those who had not perished in the Katyn slaughter went with Anders' Army, therefore all the officer vacancies in these divisions were filled by the Russians, some of them with Polish names or under Polish pseudonyms. On May 25, 1943, all the Poles deported to the Soviet Union between the ages of sixteen and twenty-five had been conscripted (men and women) to fill the ranks of the first Kosciuszko Division. No doubt these people were overjoyed by their release from the labour camps and places of exile and, as they hoped, were a stage nearer their return to their country. The Commander of this Division had declared in his broadcast on July 26, 1943, that his men had been " marvellously equipped with the armament and military equipment of the most recent type; everything from magnificent tommy-guns to T.34 tanks and fast fighters. No Polish Army has ever possessed such modern technical equipment and in such quantities as has this division named after Kosciuszko." It can be deduced from this announcement that the situation of the ' Polish ' Soviet Division was entirely different from the situation of General Anders' Army which, although unable to obtain any armaments, had been requested to leave immediately for the front-line.

On September 1, the *Red Star* announced that, after ten weeks training, the Kosciuszko Division had been sent to the front, and on October 12 " that it had forced the Dniepr." Then, " owing to the influx of volunteers, a second Division had been formed "; its Commander was a volunteer from the Spanish War called Walter, who had changed his German name to a common Polish one. " The Poles now have a full Army Corps," *Pravda* stated, a Corps afterwards to be frequently mentioned by the Moscow radio as if it were the most famous unit of the Red Army. After two years' struggle, the Kremlin had at length achieved its aim. At last it had the ' Polish troops ' on the Russian front-line, as in 1920, with the difference that they were now termed ' Patriots ' and named after the national Polish heroes—Kosciuszko and Dąbrowski Divisions, Armoured Brigade of Westerplatte Defendants, etc. Thus the " shy body " of ' Patriots ' so " un-representative " and impossible to locate had usurped the right of the Polish Government and formed a ' Polish ' armed force in Soviet Russia.

The situation was clear. Sponsoring the ' Patriots ' as representatives of the " genuine will of the Polish people," not only of those citizens who, for the time being at least, had been resurrected in Russia, but of the entire Polish Nation, the Kremlin had now passed to a direct attack on

the Polish sector. Furthermore, the Kremlin announced the formation of Polish forces subordinated to the Soviet Government They had taken the first step along the road towards the establishment of a competitive centre of authority, with the ultimate aim of replacing the Polish Government.

PROPAGANDA ATTACK IN ENGLAND

. . . The British people . . . ask each other uneasily, what is this trend in the war that causes the Press suddenly to attack all our friends, all those who bore the brunt of the fight " against Nazi aggression."

Unhappily the people can only look to the Press for their information, and this leads me to say (as I hope you will allow me to say) that in all my experience I have never known (not even in Germany or other dictatorship States) the picture of affairs in foreign countries to be so falsified in presentation to the reading public, as is the picture of Poland, Yugoslavia and Greece in the information laid before the British people by the radio and the Press to-day. It is hypocrisy to assert that any freedom of the Press exists in this country to-day, while, in the matter of these three countries, the future of which affects us as closely and vitally as did that of Czecho-Slovakia in 1938, some secret ban has quite clearly been laid on the publication of authentic information.

(Reed, Douglas, *Time and Tide,* January 15, 1943).

. . . even more disturbing to a British public used to freedom and free expression of opinion and to a regard for truth, no matter how it may conflict with previously held ideologies, a large section of the British Press heaps abuse on all these Governments who have sacrificed everything for us, while our own Press is muzzled, and the patriotic achievements of their underground and other fighters is kept out of our Press and our radio. British public opinion is thereby deceived as to the nature of our friends.

(Graham, Alan, House of Commons, February 22, 1944).

The Soviet anti-Polish campaign in the countries of the Allies, owing to its scope and intensity, was a phenomenon unique in the annals of history.

When Germany and the Soviet Union were both striving to digest their halves of Poland with the greatest possible expediency, their tactics in propaganda and slogans were identical, the keynote being 'Poland is now finally eradicated from the register of life' and her murder had been 'right' and 'necessary for the sake of humanity.' Hitler's invasion of Russia interrupted this activity on the part of the Kremlin but only for just so long as its master was seeking help from the United Nations. When the crisis of the Soviet State was over and Stalin had begun to clear the air in the spring of 1942, with the intention of obtaining the consent of Britain and the U.S.A. to the re-annexation of those countries (already held once through the Soviet's agreement with Hitler), the verbal campaign against Poland recommenced, with Moscow gradually increasing its potency. In the early spring of 1943 when the severance of the Russo-Polish relations occurred it seemed as if

this campaign had attained its climax. But it was in February 1944, that the Soviet propaganda indeed reached its most fantastic peak when it accused the Polish C.-in-C., General Sosnkowski of being the man responsible for the massacre of the Poles in Eastern Poland in 1943-1944, i.e., when it was still occupied by the Germans.*

It was a strange scene, this picture of an Ally in the same war camp fighting another and a weaker member, and using all possible means in every possible field in order to break that country's moral resistance, to terrorise and subordinate it as a future vassal. Hitler's tactics of 1938-1939 of acting by threats, and using the medium of others to thrust the victim to the wall, were widely emulated. "The Government of fighting Poland has been fired upon from all angles and by all means within the Soviets' power and demands have been put that it must renounce half the territory of its State without even asking the consent of its own people."†

If the Soviets did not succeed in convincing the world that Poland's existence was worthless without a 'union' with the Soviets and without a 'friendly' government acting as Russia's 'Gauleiter,' it was not merely due to the rightfulness of the Polish cause, and the will of the Polish people to continue the fight, but to the sheer impossibility of any propaganda being able to convince all the people of the world that two whites make a black.

From the July, 1941, the Kremlin converted its headlines to read a 'strong and independent Poland,' changing thereby its slogans but not its final aim. Poland, even before her break with Russia, found herself once again in the same situation as in 1939—again battered with the heavy barrage of German and Soviet propaganda machines which were continuously endeavouring to submerge her under a wave of accusation, lies and slander. There was no question but that such powerful propaganda constituted a great danger for the nation against which it was directed, particularly when, as in this case, the nation had been silenced by the effective occupation of its territory and by the extermination of most of its leader element. The Polish Underground authorities reckoned that the Germans had destroyed, either by shooting or long-term imprisonment, three or even more stratas of leaders of political parties, and of every other organisation as well. Under the occupation of the Soviets, the situation was even worse, since this extermination had been carried out on a wholesale scale. Thus the ability of such a depleted nation to

* *Observer*, March 5th, 1944.

"Radio Kosciuszko (in Moscow) has charged General Sosnkowski with responsibility for the massacre of 20,000 Poles in Volyn. The story was put out a few weeks ago by some Poles in London that 70,000 Poles had been massacred by Soviet parachutists.

"The fact that a mass slaughter of Poles took place there is now confirmed, though there is a wide difference in the numbers given."

† *Myśl Polska* (Polish Thought), London, March 1st, 1944.

defend its cause and the possibility of presenting its rights to the world was limited, although the voices of its enemy could resound unchecked in every sphere of propaganda.

In 1939, the Polish cause had stood out clearly before the eyes of Great Britain and the world, and in voluntarily giving her pledge to Poland, the former had made no mention of a ' Curzon Line ' or, for that matter, any other demarcation line. Britain had given her pledge to a Poland in her entirety, as she had then existed within her frontiers. Apart from Berlin, no hesitation whatsoever upon this point had been expressed. It is not difficult to collect a large volume of speeches, articles, promises of every kind which were made by British Premiers and American leaders, ministers, diplomats and journalists on the matter. And yet, after a few years under constant barrage of Russian propaganda, a section of the Anglo-Saxon public had either changed, or else, no longer seemed sure that its opinion was the right one. Only the influence of the Soviet's propaganda could have induced part of the Press in the countries of United Nations to voluntarily serve as the supporters of Moscow claims, and direct the bitterest of attacks against one of its allies. There was probably no paper, not even a Communist one (at least until September 17, 1939) in Britain and U.S., which had not been unanimous in condemning the invasion of Poland, yet in the beginning of 1943, there were many who commenced to express the opinion that to halve Poland for the benefit of Russia ought to be done, for the simple reason that she was stronger of the two, while Poland's resistance to this decimation was classified by the same people as a " suicidal lack of commonsense," and the Polish Government, " this London Government " was judged as " behaving with a folly which its Allies cannot defend."* It would be out of proportion to state that this and similar utterances were the genuine expression of the united British opinion, but nevertheless, the British public was being fed with propaganda of this type.† At the end of November, 1943, despite energetic protests from the public, almost the entire English Press began to employ the expression, ' the old Polish frontier,'‡ when referring to

* *The New Statesman and Nation*, February 19th, 1944.

† Editor, *The Nineteenth Century and After*, January, 1944:

There is, in the British Press, an almost complete uniformity, from *The Times* to the *Daily Herald*, in the treatment of the Yugoslav situation—even the *Daily Worker* does not differ widely from *The Times*. This is but one of the many symptoms of the *Gleichshaltung* of the British press in the treatment of Foreign Affairs. Direct and truthful reporting, incisive analysis, and critical judgment have been replaced by an officially directed tendenciousness and by a moralising attitude that has small relevance to the realities. The British public was rarely so ill-informed with regard to Foreign Affairs as it is during the present war .

‡ *The Times* on January 12th, 1943, published a letter from L. D. Gamman, M.P..

Why does the B.B.C., in its bulletins on the fighting in Russia always refer to the crossing of the " 1939 " Polish frontier? Surely that line still remains the frontier of Poland. It was to defend it, and the other frontiers of Poland, that Great Britain pledged her word and ultimately went to war.

. . . The phraseology used by the B B.C. suggests that the question is already

their Ally's Eastern frontier. It seems the strongest echo was to come from Europe, where an over-joyed Goebbels kept it well-informed of the intentions underlying this reference. German propaganda from that time was able to use Poland as an example of a country which, having blindly placed its confidence in the Allies, had been " sold to the Bolsheviks."

" If it would be possible to push back history to August 1939," quoted the *Manchester Guardian*, January 28, 1944, from Goebbel's article, " the Poles, on the basis of the experience they have gained would unquestionably have organised a *Fakelzug* and brought us the keys of Danzig on a golden tray. London newspapers are emphasizing that the security of small nations depends to-day on their good relations with their great and powerful neighbours. Had Great Britain stated this in 1939, then war would have been superfluous. We are, it seems, the witnesses of Russia's experiment as to how many slaps and kicks Great Britain will take before she is provoked into reaction. Washington welcomes the experiment. The discussions in the question of Poland are *sui generis* the reconnaisance of the journalists at this time when the Russians are still on the Polish frontier. If the Russians were able to break the German front, and occupy Europe, who can prevent them doing as they will ?"

While Poland, as the victim of Anglo-Saxon Powers, had been betrayed by them, Czecho-Slovakia at the same time was presented in German propaganda as a country which had believed in Hitler's word and had benefited from this trust. On the fifth anniversary of the occupation of Prague, Hitler wrote in a letter to Hacha :—

" While the other European peoples, who allowed themselves to be pushed into a war against the Reich by our enemies, have suffered great and bloody sacrifices, and who to-day have been sold to Bolshevism by their former friends, the Czech people, under the protection of the fighting German forces, have been able to keep their most sacred values untouched."

For three and a half years German propaganda against Poland had been limited to a one-sided representation of her as the ' nuisance of Europe.' The uncovering of the Katyn murder, and the Teheran conference, had given Goebbels the opportunity to increase, with a great deal of success, the fear of imperialist Russia in Europe. From the summer of 1943, the voice of German propaganda was to repeat nightly, for many, many months to come, the phrase : 'to the Poles, and other endangered peoples of the Middle Zone—do you believe in the four freedoms promised by our opponents. Look, they cannot even release the millions of their Allies, the Poles, who are dying in the Soviet dungeons. What, therefore, can you expect ? '

Thus the progress achieved by the Soviets in their work of disintegrating the morale in the United Nations camp was plainly visible. Russia was marching to the tune that ' the sacrifice of a big State had a greater value than the sacrifice of a small nation,' that a ' stronger Russia

decided so far as Poland's eastern frontier is concerned The settlement of the unfortunate dispute between Russia and Poland will be the first test of the sincerity of the great Powers to adhere to the principles of the Atlantic Charter, to which they have all subscribed.

had the right to keep several million peoples, citizens of weaker neighbours, in concentration camps ' and that ' every demand of the stronger nation was justified by its force.' But from 1944 a victorious Russia was no longer concerned with covering her aggressive activities by any slogans ; she left that to the journalists of those countries whose governments, pressing Poland to the wall, were demanding her submission to the Soviet Union.

Russian propaganda in Britain and the U.S.A. operated through the medium of the already existing Communist Parties, their own agency services and the ' foreign correspondents ' in Moscow The role played by the latter people was unique in journalism Since Russian censorship was the most stringent in the world, the correspondent had only two alternatives, either to cable what Moscow handed him, or to be silent. It was through such a medium that the most abusive information concerning the Polish affairs came out of Russia.

The Communist Party was but one of the tools of Soviet propaganda within Allied countries, alongside it were harnessed other forces organising sympathy for the Soviet policy of annexation, and producing literature *en masse* about Soviet Russia, written by people who had never been to that country, who had no knowledge of Russia, and whose acquaintance with the Russo-Polish problem had begun only from the moment when they were supplied with material from Soviet sources. These benevolent writers boldly backing every theme connected with Moscow demands, contributed a great deal towards obscuring and falsifying the true picture of the action of the Kremlin.

The part played in their respective countries by the Communist Parties in this pro-Soviet propaganda did not change one iota with the dissolving of the Comintern. The case of the British Communist Party was particularly illustrative, showing as it did how a relatively small group (of less than 16,000 members at the outbreak of war, and 41,000 in 1943), having at its disposal enormous funds from an unknown source, was able to represent a foreign interest to such an extent.

The Russo-German Treaty of August 23, 1939, had aroused great confusion among the circles of the American and European Communist Parties. At first, some of them had decided to make no mention of the Agreement. At length, after a few days, the French Communist paper *Humanite* wrote : " Hitler had to bow before the might of the Soviet Union . . . " and that " it is imperative to hasten the signing of the Franco-Anglo-Soviet military agreement . . . " The New York *Daily Worker* naively belied itself with : " If Germany should invade Poland, the U.S.S.R will undoubtedly adhere to her policy of aiding any nation whose independence is jeopardised by an aggression." The Communist Parties were thus merely repeating the slogans contained in the latest speeches of Stalin and Molotov. The Communist Party of Great Britain went

even further in the expression of its views. On September 2, 1939, when Germany had invaded Poland and Great Britain was still undecided as to her own action, the British Communists issued a manifesto in support of the war. Harry Pollitt, leader of the Party, wrote an enthusiastic pamphlet under the title *How to Win the War*.—

" . . The Communist Party supports the war," he emphasized, "believing it to be a just war which should be supported by the whole working class and all friends of Democracy in Britain . . . To stand aside from this conflict, to contribute only revolutionary sounding phrases, while the Fascist beasts ride rough-shod over Europe, would be a betrayal of everything our forbears have fought to achieve in the course of long years of struggle against capitalism. The Polish people have no choice, war has been thrust on them They have had to fight to defend themselves from a foreign attack whose only purpose is to enslave them to Nazi Germany . . If Hitler is allowed to impose his domination on Poland, the people will be forced to accept conditions infinitely worse than anything they have yet suffered . . . Whatever the motive of the present rulers of Britain and France, the action taken by them under considerable pressure from their own people is not only helping the Polish people's fight, but is actually, for the first time, challenging the Nazi aggression.

" Now that the war has come we have no hesitation in stating the policy of the Communist Party . . . We are in support of all necessary measures to secure the Victory of Democracy over Fascism . . "

It was quite clearly put—Poland was in the camp of democracy—the Germans were the Fascists The shock was to come a fortnight later when Stalin, complying with his agreement with Germany, gave orders for his army to invade Poland; the Communist Parties in the West were held to ridicule for their " ludicrous ignorance of what had been taking place, and for their pretence of self-righteous omniscience."* They lost many of their sympathisers. In Britain the leader, Pollitt, after his untimely manifesto, was removed, and his pamphlet was withdrawn from circulation. His successors commenced a new policy issuing a strongly-worded proclamation on October 4, stating that it was " not a just and defensive war which Britain and Germany are fighting, but one for imperialist aims, colonies and world domination," and that " Polish war-mongers led their country into war at British instigation."† Finally, as a result of their anti-British policy, the *Daily Worker* was banned.

During the two succeeding years, the Communist Party of Great Britain repeated the Bolsheviks' slogans of the First Great War, the key phrase being, ' the transformation of an imperialist war into a civil war ' and ' the enemy is the governing class of one's own country.' Russia's entry into this Second Great War re-vitalised the British Communist Party,

* A similar situation developed in 1944, when Russia, without consulting Great Britain or America, recognised the Bagdolio Government in Italy The Communists, until then strongly criticising Bagdolio found themselves in a quandary.

† Golancz, Victor, *The Betrayal of the Left*, London, 1940 and *Malaja Sovietskaja Entsiklopedia* (*Small Soviet Encyclopedia*), 1940, Vol. X, p. 997, wrote·

" . . in Autumn, 1939, the unwise leaders of a landlord Poland, ordered by Anglo-French imperialists, started the war against Germany."

and it was to become the predominant factor of the Russian policy inside Britain. This state of affairs was all the more extraordinary when taking into consideration that the record of the British Communist Party was well-known to the public. Furthermore, even during this period of the Russo-British Alliance, the subterranean activity of the Party was not in line with the interests of its own country. In August and September, 1943, the headlines in the British Press had read: "Watch kept on Communists," "Espionage sentence," "Wormed vital secrets from girl clerk," "Captain gave away secrets," and so forth. While the organiser and member of the Central Committee of the British Communist Party was found guilty of espionage and sentenced to seven years' penal servitude. He was convicted of obtaining secret information in respect of the war "for a purpose prejudicial to the interests and safety of the State, information calculated to be useful to the enemy." He had enveigled a girl clerk employed in the Air Ministry to pass on secret information under the pretence that by so doing she would be helping the Soviet Union.

The *Daily Worker*—a paper belonging to a Party with a reputation such as this case revealed—became the main organ of the Russian anti-Polish propaganda campaign to vilify the Polish Government, and to endeavour to muzzle and destroy the independent Polish Press in Britain.*

During the eighteenth and the nineteenth century there were many instances where the Russian Government had intervened outside their own country, particularly in Paris, regarding books printed by either Polish emigrees or even by Frenchmen One book written by the Chevalier d'Eon about Russia was suppressed at the request of the Tsarina, Catherine the Second It did not, therefore, seem remarkable to the Poles that, in 1943, Russia should again endeavour to employ this method against their Press in Britain, in an attempt to compel it to cease writing on the discovery of the Katyn murder. But it did seem incomprehensible to the Poles that, in a free country, pressure from Russia should be able to achieve the considerable success accorded it in England.

* Hatred of the printed word is one of the characteristic features of Russian despotism. In the Muscovy of the fourteenth to seventeenth centuries, knowledge of reading was considered a sin. The clergy, in contrast to the clergy of Western culture, was an instrument in the hands of the Tsar and the propagators, not of culture but of ignorance, jealously guarding the art of reading for themselves.

This loathing of the printed word, particularly where it was in opposition to the power of the Tsar, embraced their own territory and even reached abroad The Tsarist's Ambassador, Puskin, sent in 1650, to Poland, gave a brilliant example of this hatred. He came armed with the demand that certain books printed in Poland and hostile to Muscovy, should be burnt and the authors flogged, impaled and put to death A demand which seemed alien to the Poles, who were at that time printing books for all Europe.

The Polish Chancellor gave the following reply to the Moscow envoy: "The King and we, neither order, nor forbid the printing of any book. Let the Tsar print anything he wishes about Poland in his country and we shall not be offended nor peace endangered on that account."

In the Russian-inspired British press, slogans similar to those in the Soviet newspapers began to appear : ' the Polish Press is abusing the hospitality of this country by trying to stir up trouble between the members of the United Nations.'

On the face of things, it sounded extremely hostile and constituted grounds for intervention, if not of the public prosecutor, then at least of a responsible British minister, and therefore the Ministry of Information stepped in.

The Scottish Press was the first to observe, after the arrival of the Poles in Britain, that they were printing many newspapers. On January 1, 1941, *Scotsman* had humourously noted the rapid development of the Polish camp Press, and stated that " if a dozen Polish soldiers baled out somewhere in the middle of the Sahara, they would publish a newspaper a week later, and even containing pictures."

When the tension between the Soviet and Polish Government had increased in that spring of 1943, the chief British Press censor issued a circular to the Press on March 3, calling on them " to refrain from discussing, for an unspecified period, Polish-Soviet post-war frontiers." It was a blow to the Polish people and an act in favour of the Soviet Government, who remained at liberty to write as it wished on this topic and cable its articles to Britain and throughout the world.

The Polish Union of Journalists at a meeting in London, on April 4, 1943, considered the circular and resolved as follows :

" (a) In view of Poland's determination to maintain her present frontiers with the Soviet Union and the efforts of the latter to annex half the territory of Poland, the said Circular hinders the Polish Press in its task of publicly upholding the integrity of the Polish State.

" (b) As the Soviet Press and radio have unleashed a campaign which has no scruples about the choice of arguments and expressions, the above Circular does not make for a truce but, on the contrary, has created in Great Britain unequal opportunities for the aggressive Soviet action on the one hand, and the defensive Polish action on the other.

" (c) The restriction imposed upon the Polish Press, while the Soviets continue their action in favour of the illegal annexation of half Poland, plays into the hands of German propaganda on the Continent of Europe and especially in Poland itself, for public opinion in the tortured country is unable to understand our silence on this matter or the attitude of our Allies.

" In view of the above facts the General Meeting of the Polish Union of Journalists, London section, feels constrained to ask the Polish Government to raise the matter as soon as possible with the British authorities with a view to changing this state of affairs."

Soon afterwards an attack, directed against the existence of the Polish Press in Britain (a Press read only by the comparatively small number of Poles residing in that country), was begun by some of the London papers. The *Daily Sketch*, on April 30, informed its readers that " there are thirty Polish periodicals in Britain and some of them are trying to increase

the Polish-Russian friction." It went on to suggest to the Home Office that these newspaper 'trouble-makers' must be getting their paper from illegal sources. The previous day, the same newspaper had expressed the opinion that the Polish Press ought to be 'diminished in number,' and, furthermore, that there were certain 'secret' Polish newspapers in this country. Two days before, on April 28, the *Daily Mirror* had sharply criticised three Polish papers for their publications of the facts regarding the Katyn murder. These were the first shots fired at the moment of the severance of the Polish-Russian relations. At the same time, the *Daily Worker* attacked the Polish Government, employing words common to Russian terminology but unusual for any British newspaper. Questions were raised in the House of Commons and Brendan Bracken, Minister of Information, made the following statement in reply .—

"I have received representations from M.P.'s that the *Daily Worker*, and also some other papers printed in England in foreign languages, are stirring up trouble among the United Nations The Labour Minister is making an enquiry into the activities of these foreign-language newspapers, which are alleged to occupy themselves in attacking the Soviet Government. If this allegation is well founded we shall be in duty bound to prevent the hospitality of Britain being abused by journals that appear to be more interested in feuds than news.

"The chief Press Censor has been instructed to regard their activities as falling under the regulations that prohibit cabling abroad of extracts from newspapers liable to bring about disunity among the Allied Nations. This regulation must also be applied to quotations from the *Daily Worker*, which has given up a good deal of its space to vilifying the Polish Government. No justification could possibly be made for the scandalous language used by the *Daily Worker* about the leaders of Poland.

"It is a big problem because some of these newspapers are printed in small printing factories throughout the country and by a nationality for which I have the greatest admiration, but of whom I must say, 'Every time you find a Pole you find a newspaper'

"I do not intend to tolerate this business of people publishing in foreign languages the most violent abuse, either of the Soviet Government, of the Polish Government, or of any Government connected with the United Nations."

On June 10, the *Daily Worker* gave a list of Polish papers published in Great Britain—thirty-three altogether. A few days later the *News Chronicle* wrote of even more, and both papers were able to produce names of new Polish periodicals they had 'discovered.' 'Are there too many foreign language newspapers?' was the dilemma expressed in certain sections of the British Press.

"To-day," wrote London's *Die Zeitung* in answer on June 4, "there is only one country in which all the nations of the continent can make their voice heard. This fact is a source of great moral credit to the British nation, which may well be proud of having for guests the press of a whole continent . . . the suppression by the British authorities of a few 'undesirable' foreign newspapers would amount to a victory of the totalitarian principle." On August 29, 1943, Z. Nowakowski, the Chairman of the

Union of Journalists, in the name of the Polish Press in Britain, argued in *Wiadomosci Polskie*:

"The Polish case is unique among those 'guests' from the continent. The problems of Belgium, Holland, Norway and the rest were simple and so were the problems of their press on this island, although they may have been somewhat upset by the existence of a Quisling or a Hacha or similar persons . . . The Polish cause, the cause of a nation which has nothing to be ashamed of, has always been more complicated and difficult . . .

" . If there are Germans or Soviet Russians who desire to hide many facts, the Poles have nothing to hide. And if those people, the Belgians, Dutch, Norwegians, etc , have, so to speak, victory already in their pocket, Poland must fight to keep what she had in 1939.

"When the armies of the two invaders spread over Poland, 2,900 Polish periodicals were suppressed Both the Russians and the Germans forbade even the smallest publication, and until this day none have reappeared. The cultural life of Poland has been stamped out by the enemy In every other country in Europe some press, at least, is legally published by the partisans of the Quislings or Hacha, or Petain, but only the 'secret' Underground press exists in Poland Therefore, the Polish press in Great Britain was working, not only for the emigrees, but for those 2,900 suppressed journals, and on behalf of millions of Poles in their homeland

"Can there be any better illustration of the ordeal of Polish culture than the fact that secret papers for children have to be published in Poland? But how can we explain this to an Englishman . ? Can a foreigner understand the part now being played by the free Polish press . . .? War imposed upon Poland, regulations (if I may use this word) which are exceptional. What is going on in Poland has never happened anywhere before . .

"In violation of the principles of 'savoir vivre' the Polish press defends Poland's rights to all her pre-war territory and repeats that we did not enter this war in order to emerge from it with our territory halved! It may be that this is tactless of us and by so doing, we are laying ourselves open to trouble with the censorship and to accusations of unnecessarily provoking 'friction' between the Allies. Furthermore, the Polish press must, from time to time at least, remind the world of the fate of our deportees, particularly the children. Of those deported to a part of the world where, whenever a Pole sets foot, there follows only tears and sweat. I must add that even there a Polish paper accompanied the Polish exiles. It was one of the most extraordinary papers and its story should have a place in the annals of journalism. It was a little sheet written by hand and affixed to the walls of the latrines It was written on the walls of every latrine, in every concentration camp and every prison.

"The 'vicious' Polish press in Britain had, furthermore, to enquire into the mystery of the death of ten thousand murdered Polish officers. This press had to argue with those papers who were openly accusing the Polish Government of plotting with Hitler and Goebbels. These are some of the complications and difficulties which other foreign journalists in England do not have to contend with The wrongs of the Polish nation cannot be passed over in silence by the Polish press."

At the beginning of 1944 there were twenty Polish papers in Britain, one daily and two weeklies, one, the *Wiadomosci Polskie*, an independent paper was published in seven thousand copies, the rest (apart from the *Polish Daily*) in some few hundred copies. The 'secret' papers

mentioned by those informers hostile to the Polish Press existed only in the imagination of the people themselves.

This warning from the British Minister of Information to the Editors of 'mischief-making foreign papers' could, under the existing state of affairs, only have been directed at the Polish papers, since none of the others had (except for Yugoslavia and she at a later date) any argument with the Soviets. The affair of the Polish Press was to become a most delicate problem in Britain, so delicate indeed that it could even make a diplomatic 'stir' in the relations between the British (who did not read these Polish papers) and the Soviet Government.

After Brendan Bracken's warning, the matter lay dormant for six months during which time British censorship, continuously and thoroughly 'advised' the Polish Press with what amounted to normal censorship, although officially this did not exist. The matter again became a 'touchy' one when, in the early days of 1944, Moscow intensified its attacks on the Polish Government. The victim was the most important of the Polish papers *Wiadomosci Polskie*, which the British Government forthwith suppressed. The *Observer*, on February 13, commenting on *Pravda*'s article, which had accused 'Polish imperialists' "of not wanting the destruction of Germany," simultaneously stated that "the report about the massacre of seventy thousand Poles was published by *Wiadomosci Polskie* three weeks ago. An official protest to the British Government by the Soviet Ambassador, Mr. Gusev, followed. Mr. Gusev also protested against implied appeals to Poles published in that paper to fight the Soviet parachutists in Poland."

There had been no such appeal as this. The massacre of the Poles in the Volyn province was confirmed a fortnight later by Moscow with an explanation that murder was committed by "Ukrainian Nationalists."

The above-mentioned quotation from *Wiadomosci Polskie* which, according to the *Observer*, had led M. Gusev to the Foreign Office, read as follows:

"Whether or not the British and American public wish to listen, whether or not they wish to know, we must at length begin to talk on certain questions quite openly. We cannot remain silent about the so-called Volynian shambles, which began a few months ago and is lasting until to-day. Partisans sent from Russia have killed over seventy thousand Polish people, employing the most 'teuton' of methods. Impalement, sawing in two, etc., are the quite normal means which those 'heroes' of this Underground fight are using and directing exclusively against the Poles, against the Polish poverty and misery which had managed to survive in that area. This extermination suits the Germans equally well, since the Germans and the Russians have the same aims in connection with the Poles. They both have the intention of destroying the Polish State and then exterminating the Polish nation—razing it to the ground.

"Our propaganda has been silent about certain questions without avail. We refer to the matter not so long ago for instance, of the Polish children who were and are still dying of hunger in Russia—then we began a campaign

concerning the Smolensk graves, and then suddenly there came a silence on this subject but we were and are persisting about the problems of our frontiers.

"This discussion, however, is pointless for two reasons, one, we have nothing to bargain with and two, our opponent is neither interested in the frontier of the Riga Treaty, nor the Curzon Line, nor even the 'Molotov-Ribbentrop Line,' he simply wants to smash down the frontier of the biological endurance of the Polish nation He does not want any Poland to exist at all, not even the smallest, not even some dehydrated 'Free City of Warsaw.' His desire is that those Poles who, by some miracle, will be able to survive, who will escape Volynian, Polesian, Podolian and the other scenes of slaughter, will be melted in that terrible white-hot heat of the Russian 'melting pot' which differs as much from America's 'melting pot' as day differs from night . . "

Brendan Bracken, Minister of Information, firmly refused to reconsider his decision regarding the suppression of *Wiadomosci Polskie* and, when questioned about it in the House of Commons on February 16, added: "I don't believe that British sailors should have to cart paper across the ocean to provide opportunities for foreigners in this country to help German propaganda and sow discord among the Allies."*

There was a great distress among the Poles in Britain and the Middle East when they realised that in the country which had pledged Polish independence, their paper, defending the integrity of Polish territory and the fundamental rights of the Polish nation to an independent existence, could be suppressed when it seemed as if this defence was proving unpleasant for some other Allied Power.

TOWARDS CIVIL WAR.

Between 1939-1941 the Soviets had refrained from any subversive Communist activities in the German-occupied territories of Western Poland. From a revolutionary point of view, this was a notable neglect on their part, for when Germany began her invasion of Russia, Moscow found herself without a suitable organisation in the former country's hinterland capable of conducting a 'revolutionary' Fifth Column action. The unexpected agreement concluded with the Polish Government at the moment when Russia had been facing disaster, did not hinder them from repairing this previous neglect and endeavouring to create their own instrument for internal use in Poland. In which role—whether as

* In a letter to the *Daily Telegraph*, March 10th, 1944, one of the Polish seamen answered Brenden Bracken's misrepresentation:

Can it be that the Minister has not yet heard of the services rendered to the common cause by officers and men of the Polish merchant navy? The weight of cargoes carried by Polish merchant ships to the ports of the British Empire considerably outweighs the amount of paper used to print all the British and foreign papers in Britain during the last four and a half years, and is equal to the weight of provisions required for London for twenty-five months—that is, provisions for the 4,500,000 inhabitants of Great Britain for four years British sailors are not alone in "carting paper across the ocean."

guerilla bands against the Germans or as the fore-runners of the Communist order to prepare for the Soviet domination (or for both these aims), remained to be seen.

For one or the other of these purposes, the previously disbanded Polish Communist Party was revived in 1942 under the name of Polska Partia Robotnicza (P.P.R—Polish Workers' Party). The weakness of this Party could be judged from the fact that, out of two hundred underground periodicals published during certain months of 1943, only one emanated from that Party. The P.P.R, like the non-party 'Union of Polish Patriots' in Moscow, aimed firstly at convincing the public of its strong national character and then intended acting as a normal Party within the framework of the Polish Underground. The organisers of the P.P.R. were newcomers from the Soviet Union, Comintern agents who, with enormous funds at their disposal, anxiously sought suitable members among the population who would co-operate with them. One of their most successful discoveries was the ex-General Lyzwinski-Zymierski, whom they cast for the role of Commander of their Underground Army. It was not known, either then or at a later date, whether any of the other leaders had ever been a Polish Communist. At first the P.P.R. published a very moderate political programme, in comparison with that of the existing Socialist or Peasant Parties They referred rather vaguely to their relationship with the Soviet Union, merely emphasising that 'Russia is the natural Ally of Poland' and furthermore, 'that Eastern Poland should be given to her.' The views of the P.P R. began to crystalise at that precise moment when the Soviets, after Stalingrad passed to an offensive in the Allied camp, severed relations with the Polish Government and once again called for an immediate action in the rear of the German armies. The P P.R. closely followed these changes in the Soviet policy and emphasised the Russian successes, comparing them favourably with the inactivity of the Allies, and discussing the topic of the 'second front.'

It was quite natural that, having unmasked its intentions, the P.P.R. came up against the Polish Underground State, and it was soon exposed for what it was—an enemy of the State. The further advance of the P.P.R. took them along the normal path of Communist activity—and they endeavoured to credit every action of the Underground to their own account; in this, Moscow's radio helped them to the utmost extent, announcing, for instance, that the workers battalions created by the Polish Socialist Party, 'Gwardia Ludowa' (People's Guard), was under the control of the P.P.R., as well as the 'Peasants' battalions' formed by the Peasant Party. The P.P.R. also claimed that it had been recognised by the other political parties, and proceeded to accuse the Polish Government of 'treason.' It was not long before they began following the lead of the Soviet Press in an adoration of Stalin. After their glorification of the Red Army, it was but a short step towards claiming the necessity of

fighting the Underground State itself, since it refused to be subordinated to Moscow

A strongly marked desire was evinced in the propaganda of the P.P.R. to accustom the public to the thought of a coming Russian occupation, 'as Britain and the U S A had agreed to giving the Soviets a free hand in the settlement of Central Europe, nothing could be better for the national and personal interests of everyone concerned than to accept the inevitable, naturally a few changes would result from an alliance with the Soviets, and one of these will be the introduction of the most democratic constitution of Stalin's.' The P.P.R. thus shewed itself in its true colours, the vanguard of Russian imperialism and the Soviet order, claiming the confiscation of land, property, banks, and the destruction of every institution of a democratic regime In 1943, the P.P.R. was openly promising the same destiny for Poland as had resulted from the Soviet action in 1939-1941 in her Eastern provinces.

The influence of the Communists in Poland had always been extremely weak, but, during the time of trouble through which the country was passing under the German occupation, even the smallest organised group generously provided with money could, under certain circumstances, do a great deal of harm. When the P P.R finally revealed its alien character, it could no longer be assured of finding sympathisers among the Polish people, and as its leaders had failed to set up their own organisation, they adopted a method which promised, in the long run, to create chaos in the existing Underground, namely, presenting their Communist cells under the name of already active parties and fighting organisations. There had been a well-known newspaper in Poland called *Robotnik* (The Worker), created by Pilsudski at the time of the fight with Tsardom, and the P.P.R. published a newspaper, as the " Central organ of the Polish Socialists," using the same name. After the Gestapo had liquidated the *Glos Warszawy* (Voice of Warsaw) by shooting the entire personnel, the P.P.R. immediately began to produce another paper under this title.

The universal character of the Polish Department of the Comintern cannot be denied. The law of psychological warfare—'strike at the enemy in all directions, in every field'—was thoroughly carried out. Not one Polish group was omitted; one and all came under the fire of its propaganda—in Poland, in North and South America, in Great Britain and even in the Polish Army in the Middle East and in Britain. The least attention of all was paid to that unhappy multitude of Polish people who had been deported to Russia. Wedged in the framework of the Soviet system there was now no longer any special necessity to convince them. The Soviet publication from Moscow, *Free Poland*, said very little regarding the deportees and was mainly concerned with fighting the Polish Government in London, the Poles in U S.A. and in Poland.

In the United States, the Communist Party* had contained a few 'Polish' specialists who endeavoured to act among the Americans of Polish descent, as they had in Southern America, under the slogan of 'Slav unity under Russian Command.'† In Great Britain, a small group, a few obscure persons acting under the insignia of the 'Polish Progressive Club,' among others, strove to disrupt the unity of the Polish Forces. Well supplied with money, all these Soviet tentacles, quoted by Moscow radio and press, were intended to create the impression throughout the world that a strong opposition towards their own Government existed among the Polish people, and that a great section of the population, having to choose 'between Hitlerite Germany and Russia,' elected to stand 'shoulder to shoulder with the latter.'

The next move of these Soviet cells was to establish the conviction among the people of the United Nations that the Polish Government, which had refused to give way to Moscow, did not express the 'genuine will' of the Polish people; and that a new Government should be formed wherein all the Soviet agents from Moscow, America, London, etc, should be represented, although this group, about whom the Russian Press was constantly hinting, were either Soviet or American citizens. Although this Government was as yet not established, the sovereign rights of Poland were being usurped to such a degree that Moscow created 'Polish' troops, and the Commander of these forces, a Russian General, was awarding the 'Virtuti Militari' (Polish Victoria Cross) to the soldiers, while he himself was decorated by the Soviet authorities with the Soviet's Order of Lenin, and other of his officers received the Order of the Red Banner, decorations of a distinctly Communistic flavour.

The 'shy and unrepresentative body' of the 'Union of Polish Patriots' did not find any appreciable echo in the world, despite nearly a year of strong Soviet propaganda, and it was obvious that the Soviet's threat of converting it into a Polish Government was not having the desired effect. Therefore, in its endeavour to split the Polish people, the Kremlin attempted another solution. In the early part of 1944, Moscow radio announced that a competitive organ to the existing Polish Underground State had been formed in Poland and that the power in that country was

* It was behind the Comintern from 1940 and was predestined to liquidation by it. It finally committed suicide on January, 1944, in a unique manner and its leader, in his last speech, condemned the theory of class-warfare, and praised American capitalism which had improved the social situation of the masses.

† At the 'Slav Communist meeting' in Buenos Aires on December 12th, 1943 the following calendar of Russian action in Poland was presented

(A) Re-annexation of her Eastern provinces
(B) The entrance of the Soviet troops, together with the Polish units formed in Russia into the western half of Poland
(C) The creation of a new Polish Government and conscription of Polish citizens
(D) Automatic elimination of the Polish Government in London from their influence over Polish affairs

The future was to witness this programme carried out in its entirety.

now in the hands of this new organisation. Thus yet another puppet brought into being by the Kremlin's fertile imagination, came to life over the Moscow radio.

THE SOVIET'S FIFTH COLUMN.

The experience gained in the Civil War, which lasted from 1917 to 1921 in Russia, and which terminated for the Moscow leaders only with the re-annexation of Georgia in 1923, exercised an influence over the Soviet's preparations for a future war. This experience taught them that the easiest way to crush an opponent's armies was to attack them on the flank, and disintegrate them by propaganda in the rear. In the 1919-1920 war against Poland, this type of attack on the morale of the opponent had not given the slightest success to the Bolsheviks. The Polish war was, however, only one episode in that great and extremely bloody struggle which raged for so many years throughout Russia, and so it was classified merely as ' the exception which proves the rule.'

Tukhachevski, Commander of the armies attacking Poland in 1920, imbued with the theory of the ' battle in the rear of the enemy ' and ' class-warfare,' and adhering closely to his wishful thinking, did not observe the peculiarity of this Polish war, namely, that to the Poles defending their own land, it was a national war, and he was to bring his account of the campaign against Poland to the obviously incorrect conclusion that,

" no national slogan could dim the essentials of this class-warfare which was being fought . . It is beyond question that, had we been able to tear the Polish Army from the hands of the Polish bourgeoisie, the revolution of the worker-class in that country would have been an accomplished fact. The subsequent conflagration would not have been limited to the walls of Poland, but as an untamed torrent it would have swept through western Europe . . . The Red Army will not forget this experience. And if and when the European bourgeoisie will challenge us to fight, the Red Army will be able to defeat it, and to support and spread the revolution throughout Europe."

Although Lenin was of a different opinion and had rightly assessed the idea of class-warfare in connection with Poland to be valueless, nevertheless this idea of ' war in the rear of the enemy ' was to become one of the essential features of the Soviet war doctrine. At first all hopes were exclusively directed towards the effect of this action on the morale of the enemy, but as time went on and the prospects of revolution in Europe faded, the main Russian effort in the preparation for this warfare was shifted from the moral to the material factors. The subsequent result was the tremendous development of the paratroops in Russia. Airborne regiments, trained in the Red Army camps, seemed a safer instrument for effective use than the most efficient Communist Party organised in the enemy's hinterland.

The extensive action of the German Fifth Column in Poland during 1939 had impressed the Soviet strategists, but, unlike Hitler, they did not possess in those countries west of Russia any weapon equivalent to the 700,000 Volksdeutsche colonists established in the Polish Republic. The Soviets could not base an ' action in the rear of the enemy ' on the few Russians dwelling on Polish territory since these were anti-Communists and therefore valueless. Thus, after Germany had invaded Russia, the Soviets found themselves unable to wage guerilla warfa e in Poland itself, but only on the west of the Soviet Empire, either in those areas inhabited by the Great Russians, or else in the borderland, where at least half the native population had previously been evicted and exchanged for Great Russians But, owing to an order issued by the Soviets without a great deal of forethought, these newcomers to the borderland had been removed from their homes at the beginning of the invasion, and were trekking eastward when the German motorised armies, advancing rapidly, overtook these people, scattering them over a wide area.

The situation in the territories of the Polish Republic was entirely different. Here the few sympathisers of the Communist order, particularly after twenty-one months of the Russian policy of extermination, were non-existent and there was no possibility of basing a Russian action on any local inhabitants The Soviet General Staff was therefore obliged to seek an alternative solution.

The eastern half of Poland had been ' swept clean ' by the Russians during their occupation At the same time, the country had lost a great percentage of its population and was more than half ruined, for war had already twice passed here—in 1939 and 1941. The factor which facilitated Russian action in this area, however, was that the Germans, unable to police the occupied territories with close supervision, were obliged to limit their attention to key-positions, railways, towns, bridges and boroughs. Each borough contained 30 to 40 S S men who, in addition to the German officials, acted as guards and ruled the newly conquered areas by terror. In the event of any resistance, a punitive expedition in lorries was dispatched and the rebellion settled in no time by an iron fist, by the shooting of guilty and innocent alike, burning villages and restoring German law This primitive system of government depended to a great extent on good communications. In Eastern Poland, where these were not satisfactory and where the network of roads was at its worst, that is, chiefly in the central marshes of the land of Polesie, south of that territory in the forests of Volyn, and northwards in the area of Baranowicze, in those regions where the population was very scattered, the Russians were able to drop their agents. A few of them made their first appearance in December 1941 and the spring of 1942 in that country. These agents were not concerned with fighting the German occupant, they had been sent with definite orders to provoke a ' general rising ' in Poland or, at least, in certain sections of it, but the execution of such an order was

beyond their power. The Russians were then in full retreat and a rising in the rear of the Germans, without preparation, with no supplies and, furthermore, without the consent of the already existing Polish Underground, was out of the question. These Soviet agents found the problem of survival to be of the greatest importance at this stage. Food was vital, and since these Russian parachutists hidden in the forests were unable to get at supplies, they took by force what little the villagers had been able to keep by them.

From the early days of the autumn of 1941, as aforementioned, Moscow had broadcast in the language of every occupied country and had called for an immediate uprising against the Axis. Such demands met with an energetic refusal from every Government in exile then residing in London. In this field, the Moscow gamble was first able to attain a notable success as far as Yugoslavia was concerned, but the action regarding Poland, was begun in earnest only after the Kremlin had decided to break with the Polish Government. From that moment, no longer bound by any commitments, the Kremlin strongly emphasised its calls for an immediate uprising in Poland, directly opposing its policy of an active open resistance to the 'limited action' executed by the Home Army, under the orders of the Polish Government. A few quotations from Moscow's *Free Poland** revealed the trend of Russian propaganda on this subject.

"Is it possible for people," wrote this paper "to be mobilised under the banner of 'wait,' of 'passivity'? . . . Those, who are hoping by means of insinuation to create an abyss between the fighting partisans, the people's vanguard and the whole nation, will be wrong Who, giving orders from abroad are in a position to forbid these people to take an active part in the struggle?' . . We consider the policy of inactivity, of waiting, as treason and against the interests of Poland . . . The lying reasons regarding avoiding unnecessary sacrifice of Polish people cannot be taken seriously . . "

Had the Polish people responded to *Free Poland's* appeal from Moscow and revolted there and then, the savage and sanguinary repression undertaken by the Germans in reprisal would merely have been the continuation of that exterminating action executed in Eastern Poland during 1939-1941. Soviet propaganda put into the appeal every Polish national slogan, even terming the Soviets the 'defenders' of the Catholic religion. All protests made by Sikorski against these appeals as being an 'interference with Poland's internal affairs' were repaid with interest by Soviet propaganda.

"Sikorski has no need to offer excuses for not raising the flag of rebellion," wrote the same *Free Poland* a week later, "but a rebellion is not a Chinese dragon which leaps out of a box at the touch of a spring . . . Sikorski cannot summon a rebellion but he does proclaim the slogan of inactivity with a clear conscience . . . Those who started the battle against the

* *Wolna Polska*, March 1st, 1943.

Germans must now fear, not only them, but a shot from behind, a treacherous stab in the back"

Russian planes also dropped leaflets containing similar slogans urging the population to revolt. "The time has arrived for action," "for yours and for our freedom" (the latter phrase had appeared on the ancient Polish banners carried during the insurrection against Tsardom in 1831), and repeated Stalin's assurance of a "strong and independent Poland." Leaflets such as these were dropped as far as Warsaw on May 12-13, 1943, when Russian bombers were once more battering that city.

The Allied Press, it is worth noting, did not share the opinion of the Soviets over the question of a revolt in those countries under German occupation, and on this point the Soviets received no support whatever. How far this opinion differed from that held by the other members of the Allied camp was evident when even Dr. Benes, who had placed his hopes one hundred per cent in Russia and obediently followed every turn and twist of the Soviet policy, had not dared to risk proclaiming a rebellion in Bohemia, realising the hopelessness of such a call, and the inevitable weakening of any position which he hoped to possess in that part of the world. His recommendation to that country of "watchful waiting" was abruptly classed in the Soviet Press as "sentimental slush." But in spite of the strong invectives of that Press against him, even after he had concluded the treaty with Russia, Benes refused to send out the call for an uprising in Czecho-Slovakia until the Soviet armies in their offensive had reached the borders of that country. Moscow did not herself believe in the outcome of her appeals for revolt, but nevertheless they were made in order to present the Soviet Union as the chief actor in this great drama of battle being enacted in Europe . . And as its saviour! It would, she judged, repay her in the long run. According to the Kremlin the 'bourgeois Polish Government (like the others residing in London) were prosecuting their capitalist interests and were not active enough in the fight against the German invader,' while the Soviets were prepared to rally the most 'patriotic' elements round their 'representatives' in Poland and in the other countries as well and to 'fight.' From this theory sprang those 'patriotic' slogans employed by Soviet organisations throughout Europe, and the outcry for 'immediate activity' and 'no delay.' But this theory was to fail completely as far as Poland was concerned; the Russian agents themselves had to adopt a waiting attitude.

When the Russians had begun to attain a success on the front in 1943, the Communist agitators in the Eastern territories of Poland were strengthened by these so-called partisans On their appearance, the Commander of the Home Army forwarded the suggestion that they should join the framework of his organisation but form, if they so wished, separate units His proposal met with a blank refusal. These men kept themselves mainly in small groups, eight to sixteen well-armed bands

composed from Soviet international troops, many of whom had fought in the Spanish War.

By 1943, the German invader was forced to admit that he had been unable to subjugate Poland to the same extent as he had those countries in Western Europe, where German transports were moving freely without escorts and isolated German officials and soldiers could work and travel in safety. The troops of the Underground Home Army were in action throughout all Poland. Further eastward the situation was more confused since there were, in addition, parties of Ukrainians, and later Soviet partisans for the Germans to contend with And apart from these, bands of people, who either could not find, or did not wish to find, their metier under German rule—deserters from every army, Russian, German, and from those twelve nations who had marched with Hitler into the Soviet Union, Frenchmen escaped from prisoner-of-war camps, and Jews from ghettos, even groups of ordinary bandits, were everywhere. Still further eastward Soviet guerilla forces were acting on Russian territories. Soviet propaganda was extensive regarding the achievements of these partisans. In view of the circumstances, there appeared to be a great deal of exaggeration attached to these reports. Soviet White Ruthenia and the Ukraine is mainly a flat country with just the forest to serve as a protection for any guerilla bands and these forces could only have stayed in certain areas for a limited time. Events proved that the Germans were able to protect their rear sufficiently well enough to continue to get supplies up to their front line as far as Volga.

The only conclusions which could be drawn were that these Soviet guerilla forces must either have been very small in number, or else they were not occupied in fighting against the Germans. Both conclusions were, in effect, true as far as Poland was concerned. The Soviet partisans who began to appear after the Stalingrad battle, wished to remain intact until the arrival of their parent armies, and they were therefore avoiding any encounter with the occupant. It was a form of armed neutrality established between these forces and the Germans ; between the forces of the invader from the West who ruled the country by terror, and the spearhead of the other invader from the East, who anticipated an eventual conquest of that country Since the conceptions of the Polish Underground and those of the Soviet partisans were entirely alien to one another, clashes consequently occurred, particularly as the Soviet partisans, acting at random in a terrain unknown to them, at first provoked the Germans into many acts of revenge against the innocent inhabitants. Charges were levelled on the part of the Kremlin that Polish troops had attacked the partisans, but the Commander of the Home Army cleared the situation in the autumn of 1943 when he issued an order of the day to the effect that "all robber bands injuring the population were to be fought regardless

of their nationality or the banner under which they were operating."*

Since the Soviet agents and partisans in Poland did not encounter any revolutionary embers, but only a strongly organised National Underground pre-occupied with the one idea—to expel the Germans—they were unable to gain any influence Each band had baled out by parachute, and there was no central point where these partisans could congregate in Poland. In this country so alien to them, they could neither organise guerilla warfare, as they had done in the Russian Civil War, nor instigate a movement analogous to Jacquerie. There only remained one factor for the Soviets to exploit, namely, the population's 'burning hatred' of the Germans, which might perhaps be 'directed by Soviet leadership.' However, a national leadership already existed in Poland, and a very strong one at that, while in her Eastern provinces, dread of the Russians (after the appalling persecution of 1939-1941 and the fear of deportation to the Soviet Union) was no less than their hatred for the Germans; therefore the Soviet partisans could not find a niche for themselves. Under these circumstances they represented but scant value in the battle then being fought, and Moscow decided to use them solely as a basis for the future Soviet reconstruction of Poland.

In this last, their preparatory role was to weaken the element most dangerous to the future Communist order, that is, the Polish nation. The Russian partisans were formally presented in Moscow propaganda as an anti-German instrument, but as far as the population was concerned, they were the representatives of a chauvinist Russia. Moscow radio stations proclaimed them as 'liberators,' but their action on the spot proved to be one of 'kill the squires—kill the Poles!' although no 'squires' had survived the hurricane of war which had twice passed over this terrain. It must be born in mind that liquidation of the inhabitants presented no difficulty even to the smallest partisan bands in a country where farms were dispersed over a wide area The Germans themselves preferred to let things take their course. After all, it was to their advantage to have this 'dangerous Polish element' exterminated.

As the Red Army approached Poland, the number of their partisans in several districts was strengthened by paratroops and formed into quite large bands. Lack of relations between Poland and Russia had sad consequences in this field of underground activities. In accordance with the policy of their Government, the Polish leaders were inclined to negotiate. They refused to fight any Soviet partisan and were persistent in extending a hand in an attempt to find some compromise and unite in an action against the German foe; but the Russians demanded complete submission to Moscow's orders. In some cases the Soviet partisans felt strong enough to enforce this obedience and as a result there were several armed encounters at the end of 1943.

* "The Polish Underground Army," *Polish Fortnightly Review*, January 15th, 1944.

III.

MOSCOW versus EUROPE?

On the troika (the three-spanned team of horses) Russia flies, inspired by God. O Russia, whither art thou dashing? Reply! But she replies not; the horses' bells break into a wondrous sound; the shattered air becomes a tempest and the thunder growls. Russia flies past all else upon the earth; and other peoples, kingdoms and empires gaze askance as they stand aside to make way for her.

(Gogol, *Dead Souls*)

'Russia versus Europe' was reminiscent of the slogan 'Bolshevism against the World' From the beginning of the German invasion of the Soviet Union, and subsequent entry of the latter into the camp of the Allies, any reference to the 'bogy of Communism' was taboo among the United Nations. Discussions on this topic were considered to be practically savouring of the work of the Fifth Column. Therefore, mention of Russia—her past, present or future—was virtually a one-sided business, i.e., she might be praised, but adverse criticism was tantamount to sowing 'disunity among the Allies.' As events were to show, criticism became almost dangerous during 1943-1944, particularly in Britain, where, after the Russian victories, a wave of adulation for the Soviets was then sweeping that country. After listening for twenty-five years to stories of the horrors and cruelty of Moscow dictatorship, the peoples of the United Nations heard with relief of the achievements of the Red Army. With the German war machine well occupied in the east, the fear of an invasion of England had been extinguished and she was enjoying a period of respite connected, unconsciously or consciously, with Russia.

None of this, however, could help in the understanding of the Soviet Union and her designs. Had she, in fact, become an Ally not merely for the duration of this war, but for the post-war era as well, thereby safely establishing by this alliance the basis of a future world, or was this war alliance of the Soviets nothing more than a transient necessity? Had Russia indeed changed her policy and, if so, to what extent? The British and Americans, officials and Press alike, who had recently visited that country, did not talk a great deal on their return. One thing was sure—war had not broken down Russian isolationism. Its youth, who formed such an overwhelming majority of the population, educated under an entirely different system, had not been given the opportunity of understanding the peoples of the western world; similarly, it was beyond the conception of that world to realise that the terms 'freedom, neutrality, war and peace, democracy or faith' and a thousand other words, possessed an entirely different meaning in the mouth of the Soviets.

The Anglo-Saxon nations did not wish to visualise the possibility of Russia's victories being exploited to extend the realm of the dark powers

of the Soviet system, rather than to remove it. They did not wish to anticipate the tragedy which would unfold in those countries of Europe 'liberated' from the Germans by the Red Army.

The first sign observed by a few far-seeing statesmen appeared on December 1, 1941, when Moscow informed the Polish Government that she still considered Eastern Poland to be Russian territory. The curtain finally rang up on March 1, 1943, when the Soviets made it clear that they considered the 'Molotov-Ribbentrop Line' (the Russo-German frontier of 1939) as the determined Russo-Polish frontier. Thus, according to Moscow, the agreement between the two invaders (the Soviet Union and Germany) was the one which should be valid, despite the fact that one of the contracting parties had already destroyed this particular agreement by its subsequent attack of the other. In demanding the surrender of Poland on March 1, 1943, the Kremlin virtually pronounced the Atlantic Charter to be nothing more than a meaningless scrap of paper Thus Poland, deprived of one third of her inhabitants and reduced to one-half of her size would, at the very most, constitute a helpless vassal under Russian domination The order of Eastern and Central Europe was to be transformed and, together with it, the existing order of the whole of Europe. The diplomats of the United Nations and their Press did not want to believe, indeed dared not realise, what this Russian step portended They preferred to read some temporary misunderstanding into Moscow's severance of diplomatic relations with the Polish Republic. At this time only a small minority were at variance with this general wishful thinking. Only a few recognised the fact that the over-lords of the Soviet Empire had begun the greatest offensive in Russian history, an offensive against the West, preached by Lenin and put into practice by Stalin. There had, indeed, commenced a new chapter in world history which might well be called "Moscow versus Europe!" Not Hitler's enslaved Europe, whose days were already numbered and who was but a transient phenomenon in the life of one generation, but that ancient Europe, that cradle of Western civilisation and Christianity, and the seat of a multitudinous State organisations; the Europe of countless independent currents of human thought which had always made her the beacon of a free world.

In this offensive, the enemies of the Kremlin were not only its German competitors but those other nations of Europe who were united in an unwillingness to recognise Soviet domination and the supremacy of its system, and included any of those countries behind the mainland of Europe who were interested in the preservation of its existing order

After rallying from the first shock of the German blow, Russia began to sift her friends from her enemies, not merely with reference to the already existing war, but with a more far-sighted vision reaching past the defeat of Germany. Viewed in this perspective Poland (and not only Poland)

was acknowledged as a ' friend ' of Moscow, while her Government was regarded as its ' enemy.' Where possible in any country in Europe, the Soviets, in pursuance of their designs and to attain their goal, had begun a subversive movement independent of the policy of the United Nations and working through the Communist parties. Attempts to create bases for the future development of Civil War and the subsequent establishment of the Soviet system, were made, not only in Poland, but in Yugoslavia, Greece, France, Belgium and Norway Moscow was holding up her ' Underground Movements ' in Europe as the only national movements representing the respective peoples, thus, to quote one instance only the ' Free Yugoslav ' station broadcasting from Tiflis was (according to them) representing Yugoslavia, the ' Free Norway ' station from Moscow —Norway, and so on.

It was impossible to reconcile all this with the official policy proclaimed by the Soviets in their new national slogans and in their signature, despite restrictions, of the Atlantic Charter or with their subsequent dissolution of the Comintern. This succession of commitments and contradictory moves was a natural sequence of events for the Soviet Communist, who saw in it only the play which should finally produce the desired result. It was in complete accordance with orthodox Communist ideology, which had, at that time, an official and authoritative interpreter in the person of Stalin, so authoritative indeed that those in the Soviet Union who were not of the same mind had left this world years ago

The thoughts spoken by Stalin on the past twenty-five years, on the order ruling in Russia and her ultimate role in the future of the world, gives the observer the chance of realising how little the essential character of Soviet belief had changed during this time. Lenin was the theorist, the creator of a certain philosophical system of community life. He had eliminated the possibility of a Romanov dynasty and a capitalist restoration by mass execution. He had wiped out all vestiges of Western law, and then returned to the Mongol conception of state organisation. Stalin's ambition was not only to interpret and widen the scope of Lenin's world, but even to create his own. In Moscow they differentiated between ' Leninism ' and ' Stalinism ' as between two systems of political thought, but in fact, when under the heavy pressure of war ' Stalinism ' had come into contact with reality, it proved to be merely an unvarnished version of Tsardom in its purest form, vividly recalling the epoch of Ivan the Terrible and Peter the Great. In the realms of foreign policy, it meant the most primitive expansion by use of armed force. And to achieve this ambition, Stalin had already transformed Russia once again into a huge war-machine. Since this dictator was the soul of that gigantic enterprise, it would be more exact to present the Russian foreign policy, which is the direct outcome of this enterprise, rather through Stalin's words than by the formulae of his late master.

The Bolsheviks bestrode the bourgeois Russian revolutionary movement and announced the victory of the Communist Revolution over Tsardom. The Soviet Communism which emerged and which was to prove one of the most formidable factors of the twentieth century, was so closely bound with the nomadic traditions of the steppe-lands and so alien to Western civilisation that it could never have attained, through oral propaganda alone any serious success in Europe, nor a success based on a local revolution in any particular country

During the heroic epoch of Bolshevism (the word Bolshevism has a sublime meaning in the Soviet Union) they believed in an ' international proletariat ' and the imminence of revolution in other countries ' eager ' to become part of the Soviet's ' country of freedom.' But the period of waiting for the ripening of these revolutions—the result of natural social friction and changes—seemed too long, therefore Moscow, who in the early days had established the law of the ' dictatorship of the proletarian minority ' over the other sections of society, admitted without further delay the necessity of introducing Soviet Communism in other countries par force. Thus, still using the lofty slogans of socialism and still referring to the doctrines of Marx, Engels and Kautsky, the new rulers once more joined up with the channels of Tsarist imperialism and took a stand among the ranks of the most reactionary of the Powers. In the era of preparation for a new war, which they termed ' the era of building of socialism in one state,' the Bolsheviks, tired of awaiting the anticipated people's revolt in Europe, applied the thesis that revolution could only be effected through the activities of the Soviet Union—by an external action. Therefore, the work of the Communist Party in every other country lay in helping to bring about a victory of the Red Army by any means and at any cost —increasing thereby the power of Moscow. The Communists throughout the world were now levelled to the role of Moscow agents while the world revolution was to materialise only through the military offensive of the U.S.S.R. It was not the economical readiness of a certain country to change the existing capitalist order (as had been admitted heretofore), but her distance from the U.S.S.R., which was to become the decisive factor in determining her order and place in the coming ' world revolution.'

For a number of years Moscow had visualised Germany* as the nearest

* Stalin, J., *Bolshevik*, 1924, No. 11

" . . . of all European countries, Germany is the one most pregnant with revolution; a revolutionary victory in Germany is a victory all over Europe. If the revolutionary shake-up of Europe is to begin anywhere, it will begin in Germany Only Germany can take the initiative in this respect, and a victory of revolution in Germany is a full guarantee of victory of the international revolution."

Until 1934, Germany represented a country of revolutionary hopes for the Kremlin. As late as 1933, the official *Bolshevik* had written: " In Germany the proletarian revolution is nearer to realisation than in any other country He who does not understand the German problem, does not understand the path of the development of proletarian revolution in Europe."

It was clear that the Moscow overlords had for a considerable period taken their wishful thinking to be actual fact.

country in which to instigate a Communist uprising, but now the neighbours on the opposite side of every frontier of the Soviet Union were to become the first objective for the Russian's expansion of the ' Union of toilers ' It was nothing less than a complete return to the conception of Tsarist imperialism, with the difference that the arguments used to justify these activities were adapted to the Soviet's existing stock of Communist slogans. For some time, at least during the first twenty years, they had changed the slogans of Tsarist imperialism to ' self-determination ' of nations and ' liberation of oppressed peoples.' But when this movement of liberation was due to begin among their nearest neighbours, the Soviet theorists drew forward their dogma of ' security of the socialist country ' —a dogma which played a predominant role in the internal policy of their country and was expressed in the argument that the ' building of socialism in one country cannot secure it when that country was encircled by the hostile seas of a capitalist world.'

In 1938, Stalin wrote his famous letter to Comrade Ivanov, once more stressing this tenet :

" We would be in a position to say that the victory (of socialism in the Soviet Union) is complete, if our country were situated on an island and if it had not many other (capitalist) countries around it. But since we do not live on an island but in a ' system of States,' a considerable number of which are hostile to the land of socialism, thus creating the danger of intervention and restoration (of the bourgeois system), we say openly and honestly that the victory of socialism in our country is not yet complete

" This problem remains to be solved . . . It can be solved only by uniting the serious efforts of the international proletariat with the still more serious efforts of the entire Soviet people."

What " these serious efforts of the Soviet people " meant was seen in 1939-1940, when Russia occupied the free countries behind her western frontier and, without any " effort of the international proletariat," was able " to push the western world back a fraction." The conquered territories were immediately ' fortified.' In the language of Moscow, this meant that over twenty million inhabitants, comprising Poles, Estonians, Latvians, Lithuanians and Moldavians, were forthwith inserted within the framework of the Soviet system. Thus, by the consequent break-up of the bourgeois order in those countries, the security of the Soviet Union was increased ' a fraction ' but no more, since, according to the view of the Kremlin, the Soviet Union would only be finally secured from the threat of invasion and fresh war through the sovietisation of the ' system of States 'and then the whole world Stalin's formula clearly indicated the necessity of introducing Communism in every country as a measure of defence for the U.S.S.R.

•It would be a mistake to consider that the sovietisation of any country is merely limited to the removal of the bourgeois order—internationalism with its dictatorship is one and the same and cannot be divided , in fact, ' there is room for only one State in the world.' This resurrected idea, Moscow—a third Rome, was unmistakably expressed by Stalin in his theory

of a ' federation of Soviet Republics ' throughout Europe and the world, which was supposed to bring ' ever-lasting peace and happiness ' to all peoples of the globe To this end a central government of the super-Soviet federation was necessary and that government already had its being in the Kremlin.

If anyone still had any doubts as to how such an ' aggrandisement ' of the Soviet Union would work out, they must have been totally disillusioned after the terrible example which Moscow made of those occupied countries in 1939-1941 Termed ' republics,' they had been subordinated to the Kremlin, as any other district of the Soviet Empire. This new ' federation ' of sixteen Republics in no way differed from the Union of eleven Republics which had existed until then.

According to Moscow's official explanation, aggrandisement of the Soviet Union was to be effected through the ' voluntary concord ' of the neighbouring countries and without aggression However, as such ' concord ' in these countries was non-existent, the Soviets, anxious to create a ' voluntary ' desire to ' unite with the Soviet Empire,' on the part of the invaded country, were obliged to proclaim some justification for their action. The voice of the small Communist minority, of those few Soviet agents (imported to play the same role as Hitler's ' tourists '), heard discoursing over the Moscow radio, was considered to be sufficient in this respect Thus the ' self-determination of the nations '* about which these Soviet theorists had been speaking so extensively, and which had been considered until now an inviolable law, was cast aside while the dictatorship of the minority was riding over the will of the majority.

The policy adopted by Moscow during the Second Great War was merely a logical fulfilment of these Soviet theories Soviet officialdom, that small class of profiteers who through the power of their organisation had established a privileged position for themselves in the State and who, as the exclusive centre of the government, were responsible for its achievements and failures, was strongly imbued by these ruling principles. The amazement in the World Press on this or that tactic of the Soviet Union, the so often expressed hopes in 1942-1943 that Moscow would retire from this or that political position, were merely a witness to the author's remoteness from Soviet reality and the lack of comprehension regarding its essential difference from the reality of western civilisation

Of all the countries in the world, Russia is the most centralised, but it appears that this centralisation reached its highest peak in the domain of foreign policy. Only official statements were transmitted and only members of the civil service were sent abroad, which meant that every

* Stalin, J., *Leninism*, p. 382 : Formerly, the principle of self-determination of nations was usually misinterpreted. It was frequently narrowed down to mere cultural self-government As a consequence, the idea of self-determination stood in danger of becoming transformed from an instrument to combat annexations into an instrument for justifying them !

move of Russian diplomacy and Press, every word and action of its Soviet representatives, in fact, of all Soviet Russians abroad, was an expression of the official policy and the realisation of some pre-determined plan. From the beginning of 1943, after Stalingrad, the Kremlin had conducted its foreign policy in the spirit of high independence, of *faits accomplis* towards the weaker partners of the United Nations, and of constantly increasing demands towards the stronger ones This Soviet attack against Europe was disguised under the ancient slogans of Tsarist imperialism, such as ' Slav unity '* and the ' necessity of reaching the open seas '—' strategical frontiers ' and so forth. All these slogans, including ' self-determination of nations,' were intended for external consumption only. As for Moscow itself, it had a thoroughly elaborated creed. As late as 1938, Stalin, in his *History of the Communist Party in the U.S.S.R.* (it was repeated in the English edition of 1942), had inserted and repeated the oath which he had taken over the grave of Lenin :—" Departing from us, Comrade Lenin adjured us to be faithful to the principles of the Communist Internationale. We vow to you, Comrade Lenin, that we will not spare our lives to strengthen and extend the union of the toilers of the whole world, the Communist Internationale "

According to Stalin's conception, the term ' Communist Internationale,' could only mean ' Soviet Communism,' the antithesis of Communism, which is based on the ideals of democracy and freedom for the individual. The thesis of the Internationale were employed to widen the scope of Russian Imperialism. But when Stalin finally understood that it had been Ivan the Terrible, Peter the Great and Catherine the Second who had laid the foundations of the Empire over which he was now ruling, Soviet official historians were made to ' right-about-face ' and proclaim the justice and necessity of the activities of these Tsars. Suvorov and other eminent fore-runners of the expansion of Russian Imperialism were held up as the example for the ' Soviet Internationale ' to emulate. And the order named after them with its twenty-five diamonds decorated the breasts of the Soviet Marshals who were now their successors in the " fortification and expansion of the Communist Internationale," in other words — of Russia.

SILENCE ON POLAND.

The hopes expressed by Allied diplomacy and Press that the Polish-Russian conflict could be settled, the Allies' attempts to act as mediators, the personal letters from Churchill to Stalin, from Roosevelt to Stalin,

* The Slav Congress in Moscow had proclaimed Stalin " the leader of all the Slav nations," just as Hitler had been " of all German nations " But while Hitler was from German stock, Stalin, a Georgian, had nothing in common with the Slav race.

Moscow had replaced the slogan ' proletarians of all countries unite ! ' by the slogan of " Slav unity in the Slav countries."

in fact, every activity in that direction, proved futile. The United Nations possessed no means of prevailing upon Russia to change her attitude. Only a war could do that. Since, however, the battle against the German invader in the Soviet Union was progressing satisfactorily, there was not the slightest necessity for the Kremlin to change its predetermined policy towards Poland in any way. This policy was conducted along the usual Soviet lines, with the aim of isolating the Polish Government and removing it from the camp of the United Nations, or, alternatively, by pressure exerted through the medium of Britain, to render it speechless and defenceless, in order that the problem of the re-annexation of the territories of Eastern Poland might be settled by a secret bargain with the competitors. The severance of relations with the Polish Government eased, in addition, the Soviet's task of preparing the next target, Western Poland, for its future occupation.

On June 4, 1943, the Polish Premier, General Sikorski, returning from an inspection of the troops in the Middle East, perished in an air crash off Gibraltar. There had been an ominous presentiment among his friends, many of whom had written begging him not to travel by air, but Sikorski had ignored these pleas. There were also rumours of sabotage in connection with this crash, about that time German agents had been discovered and executed in Gibraltar (the German radio accused the Soviets of this attempt), but an investigation undertaken by the British authorities in which a representative of the Polish Government participated, could find no trace of any subversive action, and the final verdict was that the cause of the catastrophe had been accidental.

Sikorski died at a time when the shares of the Poland, of which he claimed to be the representative, the Poland " which had entered the war in 1939, in full integrity " and which (as he had also claimed) " would emerge from this war after victory, stronger and greater than before," were at their lowest in the chancelleries of diplomacy Poland was the embodiment of the noble sentiments with which the Allied Nations had embarked on the war. The advance of the Red Army westward marked the ebb-tide of that idealism. Victorious Russia was entering Eastern and Central Europe with the slogans of liberation, but acted as the most ruthless of conquerors Those who wanted to believe that the Soviets had changed their ideas and altered their policy, were to receive the first shock when the Red Army crossed the border of the Baltic States and Poland The high-sounding slogans which the Kremlin had used to camouflage its power-politics were insufficient to disguise these naked facts : the Kremlin was unwilling to agree to any attempts at restoring the democratic States of the Middle Zone.

Sikorski's standing among the United Nations as a champion of the integrity of the smaller countries would have impeded the approaching Soviet diplomatic offensive, which had as its aim the strengthening of the

Soviet claims to territory west of their frontiers. His death at this particular moment naturally struck the imagination of all and sundry. It was he who had initiated the relations between his Government and Russia; it was he who had received so many pledges from Britain as to the future of Poland, and it was he who had sacrificed a great deal in maintaining relations with the Soviets, yet, in spite of it all, he was to watch his efforts fail. He had been obliged to recognise that his " personal sacrifice was depreciated by those for whom it had been made, and to realise how cynically it had been derided by those whose crime he had forgiven in the name of the Polish Government," wrote the independent Polish Press. The task undertaken by Sikorski in relation to Russia was by no means easy; with his Government on foreign territory, he could never for one moment allow himself to forget the importance of preserving the ' Front of the United Nations.' Sikorski's fight for Poland's integrity in the arena of Allied diplomacy was backed by a united Polish front—the mere thought of bargaining with Polish territory was considered high treason by its people Sikorski, as Prime Minister, had a greater scope for his negotiations in an undertaking such as this than a Minister of any other country would have had under similar circumstances—but the limit " beyond which no Pole can go " was distinctly drawn. The aims of the Soviets, however, went far beyond these ' limits,' touching the frontiers of Poland and her sovereignty, and Sikorski was unable to satisfy the Kremlin.

On July 9, 1943, *Izvestia* published a modest tribute to the late Polish Premier, stating that " he was one of those who understood the significance of the struggle of the Soviet Union against Germany, for the common cause of all the freedom-loving peoples, and particularly for the Polish people. The Soviet Union maintains its view that there must be a strong and independent Poland after Hitler's defeat. But this close collaboration was possible only with a Polish Government which was not hostile, and through a friendship and alliance with the U.S.S.R " It ended by the words that Sikorski " had finally yielded, however, to pressure from those circles of his entourage who were continuing a policy of hostility towards the Soviet Union."

Sikorski will be remembered in the history of Polish-Russian relations as one more champion (and the most unlucky one) of the rapprochement between the two nations, a policy which, under the existing circumstances, where a weak democratic country was seeking an understanding and a ' fair deal ' from a strong imperialist Power, could hardly have been successful.

Failing in all attempts to coerce the Polish Government in London to submit to Moscow, the Kremlin brought the first diplomatic round to a conclusion by declaring that the Polish Government, in refusing to accept its humiliating demands, was openly showing ' hostility ' towards the

Soviet Union. Poland had been strongly backed in her action at that period by Great Britain and the U.S.A.; the Kremlin realised the time was not yet ripe to prise away this support, and decided to wait for a more opportune moment. The Kremlin knew that each hundred miles advance westward of the Red Army would make this task easier.

After the severance of the Polish-Soviet relations there came a lull, a 'silence over Poland.' Moscow, for the time being, had to be contented with limiting its activities on the Polish sector to propaganda concerning the formation of Polish forces under Soviet command, laying emphasis on the overwhelming part the Red Army was playing in Poland's 'liberation.' She expressed her nervous anger by endeavouring to silence the Polish Press in Britain and the U.S.A. on the ever-present frontier question, while her propaganda underlined that "Stalin had solemnly declared his wish to see a strong and independent Poland, a fact already well-known to the Red Army, but one which the Poles did not wish to acknowledge."

On the Allied sector in 1943, the Soviets increased their propaganda of a 'second front' in Europe. It was not Stalin's policy to discuss political matters at this time, and Russian propaganda was stressing the point that Germany must first be defeated. In spite of numerous invitations, Stalin did not wish to meet the leaders of the Great Democratic Powers. He preferred to encounter them when he was in the position, not only to make new demands in support of the Russian policy and designs, but to compel the Allies to agree with him. Therefore, he waited until the advance of the Red Army into Central Europe enabled him to talk, not in the role of a supplicant, but as the master of the forthcoming activities of the war. At length, after continuous requests from Britain and the U.S.A., a conference between the Ministers of Foreign Affairs was arranged and held in Moscow on October 19-30, 1943, and was intended to prepare the ground for a meeting of the three chiefs of the United Nations. It was obvious the Kremlin considered the moment opportune to discuss political questions and *Pravda* made the Soviet attitude clear in advance, stating that the main topic of the Three-Power Conference would not be military but political problems, in particular, those of post-war relations in Europe. "Everyone ought to know," wrote *Pravda* threateningly, "that the borders of the Soviet Union can no more be a question for discussion than can be the frontiers of the U.S.A. or the status of California."*

The Kremlin was thus presuming that the Allies would agree with the fact that within these 'borders' were the territories which Russia would re-annex on the West as far as the 'Ribbentrop-Molotov Line.' The Moscow Conference did not touch on frontiers, but shortly afterwards, through the medium of the Russian envoy in Mexico, Oumansky, the Kremlin once more announced that it had just this 'line' and none other in mind.†

* October 13th, 1943.

† Oumansky's statement of November 13th, 1943.

The communiqués after the Moscow Conference stated that the majority of the questions which had been settled concerned military problems, but the preliminaries at any rate of the questions concerning the occupation of not only Germany and her satellites, but also of the countries who had fought against Hitler, namely, Poland, Norway, Belgium, Holland, Yugoslavia and Greece, had been approached. The clause that the Great Powers " after the end of hostilities will not use their forces on the territories of the other States, excluding the aims announced in this Statement, and after mutual consultation " was a formula which would permit of the occupation of other countries for an indefinite period. In the language of the Soviet politicians, it meant that, according to this Article 6 of the Declaration, the Kremlin could use armed forces during the war on the territories of the other States, including those of the Allies, for purposes entirely alien to the ones stated in the Declaration, for deportation, recruitment, plebiscites, creation of puppet governments and furthermore, could execute all these activities without consulting Britain, the United States and the rest of the United Nations. Thus, those few words added by Molotov to the text of Cordell Hull, " after the end of hostilities " not merely changed the sense of the Declaration itself but, in fact, shelved the principles of the Atlantic Charter and established the spheres of occupation. The outcome of this at the end of hostilities must be judged from past experience, Russia once having occupied enemy territory or entered any friendly country in wartime, has never been willing to leave it afterwards. It can well be imagined what arguments and actions would be necessary to force her to quit the countries of East and Central Europe, which, by the twists of war, found themselves in Russian power. Since, according to the opinion of Moscow, practically every country in the path of the Red Army was ' liberated ' by it (with the assistance of the local army previously created in the U.S.S.R , Polish, Austrian, Czech, Estonian, Latvian, Lithuanian, as the case may be), a more lengthy stay by the Russian Army would be simply a ' friendly ' gesture to that country. In such a role the Russian troops ' invited ' by Marshal Tito had entered Yugoslavia.

TEHERAN DEFEAT.

If Europe fails, all fail. If Europe's problem can be solved, there is hope that the problem can be solved everywhere.

(Sir Walter Layton, *The British Commonwealth*, London, 1944))

At the end of 1943 by a decree of fate, two great opponents, representatives of two different systems of life stood face to face at Teheran, each with his own plan for a new European order, and each hoping to secure thereby his own country after the anticipated victory over Germany. They had both been outstanding builders during their lifetime, and defenders of their respective systems. Each had expressed his creed and

faith in speech and writing, and it is worth while at this juncture to recall a few of the thoughts which each had put on record in connection with his opponent's beliefs. Some extracts of Churchill's have already been quoted; he was the man whose activity had long ago gained him in Moscow the reputation of being the " greatest hater of Soviet Russia "; the man recognised as responsible for the intervention in Russia in 1919, and to the Soviets this term ' intervention ' was synonymous with all the evils appertaining to, and created by Capitalism—' the plague of mankind '; ' intervention ' to them meant civil war—Deniken, Yudenitsh, Koltchak subsidised by the capitalist world; it was associated with starvation, and the slaughter of millions, all that butchery accomplished in Russia during those years of Red Tsardom's fight for power, and the stabilisation of the new order. Soviet Communism directed the wrath of the masses against the ' foreign devils '—those aristocrats, landlords and " paid agents of Clemenceau and Churchill." The former had died long ago, and the latter had waged a fight against the new rulers of the Kremlin for many years. He had not hesitated to spare them, speaking of " the dark power of Moscow " where " we have a band of cosmopolitan conspirators gathered from the underworlds of the great cities of Europe and America in despotic possession of still great resources "* His distrust of the Communist system was well-known. He spoke bluntly, " I will not pretend that if I had to choose between Communism and Nazism, I would choose Communism. I hope not to be called upon to survive in the world under a government of either of those dispensations."† Already fighting one of those ' dispensations,' he was bargaining with the other in an effort to win the war and peace for Britain . . . Europe was at stake, and with it the future of the British Isles . . and its Empire! . . . Not so long ago Churchill had presented a programme for a *Pax Europea,* the outline of an organisation which should have satisfied to a great extent the interests of every European nation. He broadcast on March 21, 1943 :—

" We must try—I am speaking of course, only for ourselves—we must try to make the Council of Europe, or whatever it may be called, into a really effective league, with all the strongest forces concerned woven into its texture, with a High Court to adjust disputes, and with armed forces, national or international, or both, held ready to enforce these decisions and to prevent renewed aggression and the preparation of future wars.

"Anyone can see that this Council, when created, must eventually embrace the whole of Europe, and that all the main branches of the European family must some day be partners in it. What is to happen to the large number of small nations whose rights and interests must be safeguarded? Here let me ask what would be thought of an army that consisted only of battalions and brigades and which never formed any of the larger and higher organisations like army corps. It would soon get mopped up It would therefore seem, to me, at any rate, worthy of patient study that, side by side with the great Powers, there should be a number of groupings of

* House of Commons, November 25th, 1925

† House of Commons, April 14th, 1937.

states or confederations which would express themselves through their own chosen representatives, the whole making a council of great states and groups of states.

" It is my earnest hope, though I can hardly expect to see it fulfilled in my lifetime, that we shall achieve the largest common measure of the integrated life of Europe that is possible without destroying the individual characteristics and traditions of its many ancient and historic races. All this will, I believe, be found to harmonise with the high permanent interests of Britain, the United States and Russia. It certainly cannot be accomplished without their cordial and concerted agreement and direct participation. Thus, and thus only, will the glory of Europe rise again."

Churchill " earnestly hoped " that such a solution—a federation of Europe, the Council of Europe, would harmonise with the interests of the Big Three Powers, that is, of Russia as well ! But was Russia in agreement with this opinion ? Throughout the entire life of the Soviet regime, there had been a strongly-expressed unfriendly attitude towards Britain as " the head of world capitalism " and the main enemy of Communism. Stalin had frequently emphasised that Britain was the antithesis of Russia. To quote for instance, his words at the XIV Congress of the Party :—

" There are being created two principal, but polar, centres . in the world. The Anglo-American for the bourgeois governments, and the Soviet Union for the workers of the West and the revolutionary East England attracts by her riches, from it one can obtain credit, the Soviet Union attracts by its revolutionary experience "

As leader of the Soviet State, Stalin's hatred of England was no less than the hatred which his opponent had not so long ago presented towards Soviet Communism.

" English capitalism," claimed Stalin, " was, is, and will be the most vicious strangler of popular revolutions . . . The English bourgeoisie has always stood in the front ranks of those who crushed liberating movements of mankind

" The Soviet people will never forget the violations, robberies and military invasion which were inflicted on our country a few years ago by the grace of English capitalists "*

And now in 1943, those English Capitalists, through the medium of Winston S. Churchill, were propounding their idea of a ' federation of Europe.' But, from the very first hour when the Soviet leaders had emerged as the conquerors of Moscow and entered the Kremlin, they had vigorously fought against the realisation of any such idea. They saw the road to a Soviet-Communist victory lay in the disruption of the existing governments and the pulverising of every nation in Europe and the world ; while the idea of a smaller or larger federation of states could only mean for them the strengthening of the anti-Communist group. Thus Moscow's policy was for glorifying the quasi-federation in the Soviet Union, while violently opposing by threat, intrigue, diplomatic pressure and propaganda, not only the attempts, but even the thoughts of an attempt at such federation among the States between the Baltic and the

* Stalin, J , " On the Menace of War," *Pravda,* July 22nd, 1927.

Aegean Sea. Poland, with her tradition and her ability to gain partners and form unions was, in particular, closely watched by Moscow.

Thus the ideas of federation which were coming to the fore in Eastern and Central Europe during the first years of the war as the result of bitter experience, were persistently thwarted by the Kremlin. Churchill's preliminary proposal to organise Europe, encountered a wave of anger from Moscow.* The Soviet Press campaign, threatening to break up the Treaty with Britain, followed the dogma already laid down by Stalin :—

" For the slogan—the United States of Europe—we will substitute the slogan of the Federation of the Soviet Republics of advanced countries and colonies which have fallen or are falling away from the imperialist system of economy."†

This was outspoken enough—a Russian Empire incorporating Europe The Soviet Union could be finally triumphant only in the event of the total effacement of the opposite ' polar centre.'

" If the Russian Bolsheviks," Churchill had once written, " can pull down Great Britain and obliterate the British Empire as a force in the world, they are convinced the road will be clear for a general butchery, followed by a universal tyranny . . . "‡

On November 6, 1943, Stalin gave still further evidence in his speech that there had been no change in the ideological creed of the Kremlin. He apotheosised the Soviet Communist system and the—

" leadership of the Bolshevik Party " under which " workers, peasants and intelligentsia (of the Soviet Union) have won their freedom and built the Socialist society." " The Communist Party in the patriotic war has stood as the inspiration and is the organiser of the nation-wide struggle against Fascist invaders .§ The Soviet State," Stalin emphasised with pride, " was never so stable and unshakeable as now, in the third year of our patriotic war. The lessons of the war show that the Soviet system is not only

* One of the most vigorous attacks against " federations, confederations, and regional blocs of States," was made by Moscow's *War and the Working Class* in August, 1943. Moscow emphasised that " the project of an Eastern European Federation (democratic Czecho-Slovakia, feudal Hungary, republican Poland and monarchist Rumania) is directed against the Soviet Union " Such a federation conceived after the pattern of the Austria-Hungarian Empire, was totally incompatible with the security of the Soviets.

† *Problem of Leninism*, p. 337.

‡ January 20th, 1926.

§ There was a striking similarity in the role of the elitarian mono-party which exists in dictatorships, Fascist and Communist alike, in their preparation of " the whole people for the test " " The organisational work of the Party " wrote Stalin " has united and directed towards the common goal all the efforts of Soviet people subordinating all our forces and means to the cause of defeating the enemy. During this war the Party increased its kinship with the people and has established still closer links with the wide masses of the working people." The same thought was expressed by Goebbels a few months later in one of his weekly articles in *Das Reich* and quoted by the *Daily Telegraph*, May 12th, 1944.

" The Germans in this war are led by a strong hand. The German people are led firmly by the hand, by countless directing bodies with their ramifications stretching to the last party group in the last back-of-beyond village. The party is rooted in the people and has its hand on the people's pulse.

" These millions of party officials form and shape the political will of the nation "

the best form of organising the economic and cultural development of the country in the years of peaceful construction, but also the best form of mobilising all the forces of the people for resistance to the enemy in wartime. Soviet power established twenty-six years ago has transformed our country, within a short period, into an impregnable fortress. The Red Army has the most stable and reliable rear of all the armies in the world.

" There is no doubt that the Soviet State will emerge from the war even stronger and more consolidated."

Stalin's ' Soviet people ' were fighting not only for Russia, but for the Soviet system as well, a system which has nothing in common with the democracy of the western world. In his Order of the Day on November 6, Stalin outlined his future policy after a victory had been achieved. According to him, " the peoples of Europe, liberated from the Fascist invaders " and " dismembered by the Fascist enslavers " were to have the "full rights and freedom to determine their own form of Government." Yet since the era of the negotiations in Brest-Litovsk in 1918, this ' full rights and freedom ' was known to consist of the right of the peoples to acclaim only Communism; it was as equally well-known from the outcome of those ' plebiscites ' held in Eastern Poland and in the Baltic States in 1939-1940. And would soon be known yet again when the Red Army entered East and Central Europe.

Such were the different creeds of those partners who met in Moscow and Teheran in November, 1943, in order to arrive at an agreement on a future action regarding the final victory over Germany, and the exploitation of that victory.

Such were the creeds of these representatives of the opposite ' polar centres.' But what were they trying to achieve at this juncture of the war? The propaganda of the Soviets supplied the answer: " full security for Russia," or, in plain language, ' a zone of security.' The Kremlin's interpretation of these terms was—the subordination of this zone to its rule i.e., annexation disguised by lofty slogans. " The foreign interests of the liberated European States," announced Moscow, " will be established on the basis of security against Germany " and " mutual confidence and mutual assistance." So, in plain language, the Soviet Bonaparte wanted .—(a) the agreement of the partners to his re-annexation of the Eastern part of the Middle Zone, the same areas which he previously had under his pact with Hitler, (b) a much more extensive territory in Eastern and South-Eastern Europe, i.e., the remainder of the Middle Zone, including Eastern Germany, within this sphere of security. Yugoslavia and Austria were to be under the control of both England and Russia.

The Atlantic partners' territorial demands in Europe were exactly nil, and their hopes of witnessing a real freedom for the liberated countries of liberated Europe were of no interest to Stalin, as France, Belgium, Holland—' the decaying West,' Italy, Spain, all those countries were unable to produce any real force. He was apparently quite willing to

agree to any suggestions of Churchill or Roosevelt just then, since at this juncture the matter was irrelevant to him. In so many words, he was advising the Allies to do as they wished in their part of Europe and leave him to carry out without interference whatever measures he wished in his portion.

But there was yet a third partner at this Teheran meeting, a member of the Capitalist world, for whom this argument over the frontiers and strips of land in Europe was of relative interest, since those lands under dispute were so remote from Washington—it was rather a matter of principles in this affair, principles of which his country was so proud and for which he had campaigned throughout the world. Roosevelt had condemned the imperialist action of Russia in her attack on Poland, her annexation of the Baltic States and her invasion of Finland * "The Soviet Union," he publicly criticised, on February 11, 1940, "as a matter of practical fact, as everybody knows who has got the courage to face the fact, the practical fact known to you and to all the world, is run by a dictatorship, a dictatorship as absolute as any other dictatorship in the world." But all Roosevelt's criticism was levelled before the entry of United States into the Second World War.

It would be an underestimation to state that a politician of such calibre as Roosevelt, representing as he did the peoples of the United States in a way few men could claim to have represented them (as was proved by his election to the presidency four successive times), had no vision of a post-war plan for World Peace . . . He was not prepared to discuss his designs in public, since they would first have to be recognised and accepted

* Particularly strongly worded and worthy of all the noble traditions of th United States was the statement issued after the Russian annexation of Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia, which was recognised as an act of aggression

On July 23rd, 1940, several days after the first invasion of the Baltic States by the U S S R., Sumner Welles, acting Secretary of State, made the following declaration in the name of the Government of the United States

During these past few days the devious processes whereunder the political independence and territorial integrity of the three small Baltic Republics—, Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania—were to be deliberately annihilated by one of their more powerful neighbours, have been rapidly drawing to their conclusion.

From the day when the peoples of those Republics first gained their independent and democratic form of government the people of the United States have watched their admirable progress in self-government with deep and sympathetic interest.

The policy of this Government is universally known The people of the United States are opposed to predatory activities no matter whether they are carried on by the use of forces or by the threat of force. They are likewise opposed to any form of intervention on the part of one State, however powerful, in the domestic concerns of any other sovereign State, however weak

The principles constitute the very foundations upon which the existing relationship between the 21 sovereign Republics of the New World rests.

The United States will continue to stand by these principles, because of the conviction of the American people that unless the doctrine in which these principles are inherent once again governs the relations between nations, the rule of reason, of justice, and of law—in other words, the basis of modern civilisation itself—cannot be preserved.

by the small knot of leaders of the world . . . With this aim he had undertaken the journey to Teheran, a remarkable feat considering his great physical disability. Thus the tree of future peace was planted at Teheran . . its first bitter fruits were soon seen to ripen.

Wilson's idea of basing a world peace on the League of Nations had failed: the refusal of the United States to participate had struck it a mortal blow from the first. Now, it seemed, Roosevelt was heading America yet again towards the establishment of an organisation of Nations, but guided by a Holy Alliance, a triumvirate of Great Powers on a world scale, three policemen who would shoulder the responsibility of world security The first step was the necessity to gain the consent and co-operation of the partners, or rather of one of them—Russia; to gain Stalin's confidence—therein lay the weak point of Roosevelt's scheme. He, as a free man, reared on the freest part of the Earth, imbued with the ideas of freedom and accustomed to settling the most complex problems of a great nation with a thought for the peoples' well-being, to conserve for them as much freedom as possible, was constitutionally incapable of understanding Stalin's mentality. Stalin had been born and bred in a police state under constant persecution, in a land where no-one could breathe freely and say: " I am a free man ! " This fighter of revolution had been educated in an atmosphere of lofty principles which in reality were merely empty words, since there was no room for them to be cultivated and fulfilled in that Muscovite State enslaved for centuries; this leader burdened with a fathomless hatred for his enemies, for the Tsars, and for the Capitalist world, who stamped them all as traitors of the ' Socialist state ' or the ' Socialist world,' and who, on reaching the Tsarist throne, was incapable of understanding freedom, and merely applied the Socialist slogans to inherited Russian institutions of tyranny and oppression—the confidence of such a man as this could not be gained by anyone. He personified the mistrust of Muscovy, a mistrust accumulated through centuries of isolation, and he was dominated by the belief in the divine mission of the Proletariat and Russia, embracing the whole world in these terms . . . This man would live and die under the canopy of the Tsars of Muscovy, contemptuous of the Western civilisation which he did not know, had no wish to know, and which he was unable to understand To him Roosevelt was merely one more capitalist agent, who termed himself a ' democrat.' The conflict between Democracy and Communism is much greater than between Communism and Fascism and, while Stalin would have had no difficulty in coming to an understanding with Hitler or in keeping his commitments (for they were both speaking the same language), he could not find it easy to reach any agreement with the democrat Roosevelt. The latter, in seeking his support, was revealing his weakness and weakness is despised in Moscow. Roosevelt's idea for an organisation of world security with a pre-

ponderance of capitalist states was both immaterial and alien to the Russian dictator . . . He was more interested in the disintegration of this world than in its stabilisation, and if he showed any willingness to participate in a discussion on world federation, it was exclusively as a temporary measure and in order to prevent the creation of any anti-Soviet league. After the destruction of Germany and Japan as Powers had been achieved, there would be no state on the Soviet's horizon capable of going to war against them. Thus Russia's future potential enemy could only be Great Britain.

Roosevelt and Stalin were both considering in terms of world-wide dimensions, therefore Stalin was able to exploit Roosevelt in order to weight the scales against Churchill's plan for the stabilisation of one continent-Europe. Thus in return for indefinite and unconfirmed promises for Roosevelt's scheme of a world peace, Stalin obtained concrete and immediate advantages in the recognition by the Atlantic Powers to Russia's special rights in those areas between the Baltic and Aegean seas.

Such, it is repeated, were the creeds and plain demands of the partners at this conference, but what means did each have at his disposal to enforce his will upon the opponent? Despite her success at the end of that year, Russia was in no enviable position. The recompense of her territories could not be considered as the deciding factor in the struggle; the Red Army had cracked the Eastern edge of Hitler's fortress, but not pierced it. Stalin's immense preparations for war seemed as if they were to prove inadequate. Under his leadership, the Soviet Union had made every effort within its powers in this direction, but it was a country which had exterminated the majority of its intellectual class, destroyed its former agricultural system and discovered that the new one was still inadequate; a country where the people were suffering from continual under-nourishment and frequent famine. No country with such an extremely small output in every domain of economical life could, even within the space of three five-year plans, reach the dimensions of the war effort achieved by Germany during the seven years of Hitler's régime.

Germany had used no more than half her strength when she began to fight Russia, for at least half or even more of her war-machine was engaged on the seas, holding and keeping the European stronghold along the Mediterranean and Atlantic shores to Northern Norway. Thus the effort of half Germany, i e., forty million people, if not surpassing, then was at any rate the equivalent to the effort of the one hundred and seventy millions in Stalin's Russia.

From the outset the Soviet Union found itself unable to fight and smash the enemy alone. Stalin's answer to Churchill's speech on June 22, 1941, offering an alliance, had been 'supplies' and the demand for a 'second front' . . . But for that amazing output of goods produced by Britain (with her population of less than fifty millions) and the United States and

delivered to the Soviets,* the latter would have achieved very little in the realms of war. It is true to say that the Red Army marched from the Volga to Europe in British boots and was fed on American corned beef.

These Allied supplies, however, were still insufficient to tip the scales of war on the Eastern front, but the rapid growth of the Anglo-American forces and their use on the fringe of the German occupation, the formation of new war fronts in the Mediterranean, necessitating the dispatch of extra German forces, did greatly alleviate the task of the Red Army and permit it to reconquer the occupied Russian provinces. To ensure the complete defeat of Germany, however, the engagement of the Anglo-Saxon's main land forces in Europe itself was essential.

Stalin's intention of keeping the Soviet Union outside the war as long as possible or, at least, until Germany had exhausted both herself and her opponents' forces, had proved unsuccessful. He lost the first round when Hitler attacked Russia and not Great Britain. It was not Russia after all, who watched the mortal struggle of the ' opposite centre ' of the world but, on the contrary, it was this ' opposite centre ' who was looking from across the water at the struggle of the Soviet Union. And, furthermore, Stalin was to lose the second round when it became evident that the Red Army could not win the war alone, that the presence of the Allied forces in Europe was unavoidable if a victory was to be achieved. At that moment the Red Army would not, after all, stand in Germany alone, as the Kremlin intended, but with the Allied forces backed by the greatest industry in the world.

It was clear that in the long run Stalin would have to throw away many of his trump cards. His chances of winning the game as the final victor were gradually decreasing. Russian losses through famines and epidemics, much greater even than on the battlefield itself, had proved enormous. They were already reckoned to be over one-fifth of the total population . . . The bulk of the best man-power had perished. The Germans had destroyed the most valuable provinces and, limited and insufficient as it was, Russian food and goods production had received a blow from which the country would not be able to recover for some years.

For the time being the Kremlin, by its supreme military effort, was pressing the German armies hard, while the Allies were standing by admiring her effort, praise which filled the Kremlin leaders with helpless rage. For the two previous years, the Soviet Union had stood in the role of spectator, yet it now considered the Anglo-Saxon Powers were taking too long over gathering their forces for the invasion of Europe and were, in the opinion of the Kremlin, waiting for that moment when Germany, reeling under Russian blows, would beg for quarter. Every reason which

* Russia had nothing to give in exchange. Churchill returned an evasive answer when questioned on this point in the House of Commons at the beginning of 1944, saying : " the ships which carried the goods to the Soviet Union returned loaded with whatever was in the ports." But there was nothing to take from these ports except, perhaps, timber from Archangel.

London and Washington put forward to explain or justify their delay failed to satisfy the Soviet leaders since, with every month, their military resources were decreasing while, relatively speaking, the strength of the Soviet's partners as future adversaries was growing.

Russia, however, was still holding one strong trump in her hand; she possessed the instrument whereby she could exert pressure on her partners; viz., the threat of ceasing her offensive action and of concluding a separate peace with Germany—a move which might, perhaps, have the effect of prolonging the war for an unlimited amount of time. The winter of 1943-1944 was to see the end of the period during which Stalin was under the desperate necessity of achieving his goal, namely, to extract from his partners in the Alliance commitments concerning the booty which he intended sharing according to his plan, i.e., Germany and various other countries; and to direct the war into such channels as would permit him to secure the promised areas; for, should those lands of Europe be entered not by the Red Army but by the forces of another Power, the commitments of the partners would have had relative value. An invasion of the German's European fortress from the South, so desired by the Anglo-Saxon Powers, appeared to be extremely dangerous to Stalin's ultimate designs. He could still afford to agree to an offensive through Italy, the peninsula was a blind-alley blocked by the Alps, but certainly not to an advance through the Balkans. Any appearance of the Anglo-American forces in Yugoslavia, Bulgaria and further North along that belt of States parallel with the Russian's western frontier would mean the collapse of Stalin's 'great plan.' He came to Teheran once more demanding that Europe should be invaded by way of the Channel, and only by way of the Channel, without a supplementary offensive through the Balkans.

The invasion from the British Isles was a unique undertaking in the history of modern warfare It was hazardous and uncertain, and if it proved successful, part of the success at any rate, was due to the lack of foresight of an enemy who, having dispersed his forces, was never able to wage a battle on the scale justified by the strength of his armies

By demanding an invasion of Europe from the shores of Britain only, its chances of success were considerably lessened, but Stalin, convinced that any offensive through the Balkans would affect his intentions of exploiting the victory, stuck to his point, and the strategical question which he came to settle in the Persian capital received the answer for which he had planned. Obviously, he realised that, in the event of a successful invasion of Europe, and with each liberated square mile of the Continent, the threat of a separate Russo-German peace would grow less serious. Unquestionably the scales would begin to tip over as soon as the Anglo-Saxon armies placed their foot on the Continent, even on the shores of France, and Russia's position in the Allied camp would of

necessity change, and not, it can be said, to her advantage. The Anglo-Saxon forces would land on Europe's shores armed and equipped to a degree which Russia could never have visualised. Both these armies, British and American, would stand fresh and strong and, not over-tired by hunger or a long struggle, would be able to carry out their great undertaking to the end.

During the first Great War, Tsarist diplomacy, fearful of that moment when the Allies would be the first to advance into Germany, had strained every muscle in an effort to extract the former's consent to the Russian war-aims. They had also threatened the partners with a separate peace, and were, in fact, able to achieve all they desired. Russia was promised the frontier she wanted on the West (the river Oder) and the Turkish Straits · Constantinople, the west coast of the Bosphorus, the Sea of Marmora, and the Dardanelles, Southern Thrace up to the Enos—Midia line, the coasts of Asia Minor between the Bosphorus, the river Sakaria and a point to be determined later on, the Gulf of Ismid, the islands of the Sea of Marmora, and Imbros and Tenedos. Bohemia and the Balkans (except Greece) were to have been within the Russian sphere of influence

Tsardom had been able to extract far-reaching territorial commitments from the Allies when its shares were at their lowest, in 1915, during the great retreat of the Russian Army from Poland, and in 1917, when this Army was showing all the signs of disintegration. There is no available information as to the exact period in the Second Great War which was marked by the Kremlin's threat of a separate peace, but it is clear that this powerful lever was used at the first opportunity, as soon as the Kremlin's overlord knew he could expect an affirmative reply from Hitler to any peace proposal emanating from Moscow. It can safely be assumed that, when the Red Army was approaching the frontier of Poland and the Baltic States, Hitler was willing to discuss peace conditions favourable to the Soviets. If the Government of Nicholas II had been able, at its lowest military strength to threaten the Allies with separate peace, then Stalin had no difficulty in repeating the story when his shares stood firm. Was the threat to reach a separate understanding with Germany now to be repeated by Stalin at Teheran? Was he blankly demanding 'give up or else' . . . any discussion on this topic was banned in the Allied press, and the information gained from neutral sources could not be considered as based on facts. A year later the *New York Times* wrote on December 8, 1944, that "Stalin did not want to agree to co-ordinate the action of the Red Army with the operation of the Allies without receiving definite commitments from Great Britain that the latter would support the Russian demand of Eastern Europe as far as the Curzon Line." In the event of Russian inactivity, the Allied invasion of Europe would seemingly have had less chance of success, but if Stalin had repeated the story of Brest-Litovsk, there would be certainly have been no chance at all.

The partners understood each other at Teheran without the need of words—for they were the men who had participated in, or at any rate well remembered the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk.

Washington's attitude towards the Kremlin was to change after Pearl Harbour. A declaration of war against Japan, or at least the permission for the Americans to operate from Soviet territory, would have considerably eased the former's counter-attack on that country. The Pacific was of greater interest to United States than to London, and there can be no question but that from the first moment Moscow played its Japanese suit for all it was worth, giving illusive hints and delaying any concrete promises of commitments. As the future was to reveal, Stalin did not make capital from it publicly till the Spring of 1945, when the threat of a separate peace with Germany had become valueless and, as the first proof of his good-will, he did not renew his Treaty with Japan

In Roosevelt's desire to gain Stalin's support for his plan for the stabilisation of world peace and for his co-operation against Japan, the American leader stepped along the fatal path of concessions and had little to say when Stalin in his turn placed a demand for a similar zone of security in Europe as the United States possessed in America. The Monroe doctrine, so good for Washington, would, argued Stalin, be good for Moscow as well! To fall in with this argument, Roosevelt would have to acknowledge that the ideological differences which had hitherto been a source of concern to him were no longer of any importance now, and so for certain promises of co-operation, Stalin was able to achieve a new triumph by dividing the Anglo-Saxon Powers.

Britain alone, therefore, stood out against Stalin, who was fully aware that, in the event of protest and refusal to discuss the matter further, he could still turn to Germany and receive from her the Ribbentrop-Molotov Line at any rate. Churchill, with his plan for the federation of Europe under moral British leadership, with the Atlantic Charter and war-aims behind him (in which a Poland within the frontiers of 1939 was understood to be the first item), had scant chance of winning this game.

The Russian preparations for the meeting and the background against which they had manoeuvred to set it, were far from meaningless First of all, there had never at any time been any question of Stalin agreeing to leave the Soviet Union and meet the partners somewhere abroad. The men, born of the revolution, who were moulding the ruling class in Russia and who, as Trotsky wrote in his " Defence of Terrorism," " were never concerned with the Kantian—priestly and vegetarian—Quaker prattle about the sacredness of human life; " these men were very far from presuming Stalin would ever take the risk of leaving Russia, placing himself under the protection, or rather ' at the mercy of Capitalist agents.' His predecessors in the Kremlin had not been particularly fortunate

during their visits abroad and, as the N.K.V.D. knew, the technique of such attempts had greatly advanced since the days when the Pole Berezowski had fired at Alexander III in Paris The choice of Teheran was the only concession Stalin would make, since it was on the outskirts of the zone of the Russian occupation of Persia. To the surprise of the Atlantic Democracies, however, the meeting was held on Russian territory, namely, in the Soviet Embassy. When Churchill and Roosevelt arrived at Teheran, they were informed that the Russians had learnt from a most reliable source that the Germans had planned an attempt on the Big Three ; in view of this warning, the Russians did not think it advisable to take any risk (both their fears and this information may have been groundless), and they therefore proposed to hold the meeting at the Russian Embassy, where ' everything had been prepared, and where the building was exceptionally suited to resist any surprise attempt since the house was encircled by a garden surrounded by a large wall,' etc. Thus Churchill and Roosevelt found themselves in the Soviet Embassy under the protection of Stalin's personal bodyguard (which had no one below a major among its ranks), while stationed at each corner of the house, at every tree in the garden, at every five paces round the wall, were men with tommy-guns The city of Teheran itself was flooded with plain-clothed agents and the security troops of the N K.V.D. It was suggested that Roosevelt, to avoid over-fatigue, should stay on the spot, in the apartments already prepared for him. Thus, even in Teheran, the two partners were constantly forced to remember, as in an American gangster film, the threat of the still omnipotent foe.

Although the knowledge of these alleged German attempts rested exclusively with Stalin, and the technique of this ' protection ' (it amounted almost to a kidnapping of the leaders of the Atlantic Democracies) was rather obvious, nevertheless, it was completely successful, since the two leaders concerned, anxious to maintain a friendly atmosphere, fell into the part assigned them without argument.

Stalin allowed five invitations to go by unheeded before he accepted and met the Big Two. With him had rested the choice of the meeting place and the time. The time-factor was of the greatest importance, since it was not his intentions to discuss and ask, but merely to present his terms and await the answer. Events transpired according to plan, and the discussion which followed was limited to technique of execution, and only in these details was Mine Host prepared to be generous to his partners.

Sir Eyre Crowe, then the head of the Western Department of the Foreign Office, in his memorandum for the Cabinet in 1907, had formulated the aims of the British policy in relation to the Continent. The name of Sir Eyre Crowe had been frequently mentioned as the personification of the upright policy of Tory Britain: " British policy," to quote his words,

" must display a direct and positive interest in the independence of small nations . . . Britain must be opposed to the political dictatorship of the strongest single State or groups of States at any given time."

Churchill, the pride of Tory's England, was now the executor of these precepts ; he had more than once quoted Sir Eyre Crowe in his speeches. One of the most characteristic extracts from that memorandum in which Germany was presented as England's rival (it had been written in 1907) is quoted below. In 1943, at Teheran, when the preparations for the burial of Germany were well under way, this ' rival ' could almost have become ' Russia.' By taking the liberty of substituting ' Russia ' for ' Germany,' in Sir Eyre Crowe's memorandum, the following quotation might well typify the state of mind of the British Prime Minister at Teheran.*

" Is it right or even prudent for England to incur any sacrifices or see other friendly nations sacrificed merely in order to assist . . (Russia) in building up, step by step, the fabric of a universal preponderance ? . . . British Government(s) (have) agreed to make concessions and accept compromises which not only appeared to satisfy all (Russian) demands, but were by the avowal of both parties calculated and designed to re-establish, if possible on a firmer basis, the fabric of Anglo-(Russian) friendship . . (But) the action of (Russia) towards this country . . might be likened not inappropriately to that of a professional blackmailer whose extortions are wrung from his victim by the threat of some vague and dreadful consequence in case of refusal. To give way to the blackmailer's menaces enriches him ; but it has been long proved by uniform experience that, although this may secure for the victim temporary peace, it is certain to lead to renewed molestation and higher demands after shortening periods of amicable forbearance The blackmailer is usually ruined by the first resolute stand made against his exactions and the determination to face all risks of a possible disagreeable situation rather than to continue in the path of endless concessions But, failing such determination, it is probable that the relations between the two parties will grow steadily worse.

" There is one road which, if past experience is any guide to the future, will most certainly not lead to any permanent improvement of relations with any Power, least of all (Russia), and which must, therefore, be abandoned : that is, the road paved with graceful British concessions—concessions made without any conviction either of their justice or of their being set off by equivalent counter-services The main hopes that in this manner (Russia) can be ' conciliated ' and made more friendly, must be definitely given up Men in responsible positions, whose business it is to inform themselves, and to see things as they really are, cannot conceivably retain any illusion on this subject. (Russia) will be encouraged to think twice before she gives rise to any fresh disagreement if she meets on England's part with an unvarying courtesy and consideration in all matters of common concern, but also with a prompt and firm refusal to enter into any one-sided bargains or arrangements and the most unbending determination to uphold British rights and interests in every part of the globe. There will be no surer or quicker way to win the respect of the (Russian) Government and of the (Russian) nation "

* Crowe, Eyre, Sir, *Memorandum on the Present State of British Relations with Germany.*

Churchill had apparently thought along these same lines as well. In 1938 he had written a disturbing prognosis in the event of England's diplomatic course following the road of appeasement towards Germany.

" Undoubtedly the Government could make an agreement with Germany, all they have to do is to give her back her former colonies or such others as she may desire, to muzzle the British Press and platforms by law of censorship, to give Herr Hitler a free hand to spread the Nazi system and dominance far and wide through Central Europe. After an interval, long or short, we should be drawn into a war, but by that time we should be confronted with an antagonist overwhelmingly powerful and find ourselves deprived of every friend."

At Teheran, Churchill might have found himself substituting Russia for Germany in this extract, Stalin's name in the place of Hitler's, the Soviet system for the Nazi system No one in Britain could understand better than her Prime Minister what lay at the end of the road of appeasement, and the problem now confronting him was whether or not it was the moment to ' make the first resolute stand ' as Sir Eyre Crowe had advised, and to ' ruin the blackmailer '—and the Great Alliance as well ?

Britain, in comparison with the task which fate had assigned her, was rather a small country, and her inhabitants were numerically twice or three times less than either of the two Powers who, in this twentieth century, had seen in her the rival to their contest over the continent of Europe. Due to her achievements in the organisation of her industry, and her unique role in the creation of her Empire, Britain, that great mistress of alliances, possessed authority and credit much greater than seemed feasible, when taking into consideration the figure of her population.

There were two essential alliances which could have strengthened Great Britain ; one, with the free countries of the Continent and the other with the United States.

At Teheran, Roosevelt was to turn down the opportunity of forming an Anglo-American bloc and of taking up a joint leadership of world affairs. Britain's alternative was to seek and grasp on her own the position of leader of Europe : for a Europe divided into small states could not, in this era of heavy fighting machines, of mass air armadas and of mass armoured infantry, withstand the pressure and attack of any great rapacious Power endeavouring to destroy it. Twice in the lifetime of one generation, Britain was confronted with the problem of opposing such an action and defending on the mainland of Europe the approaches to her island home. Was she now able to shoulder the burden once more and try again to stabilise a European Great Alliance when victory had been achieved under her leadership ? Churchill had already appealed to France to join the British Empire ; could this invitation be extended to cover other countries as well—the whole of Europe ?

There was no third alternative, for any alliance with Russia occasioned during a war against a common enemy standing between Britain and Russia, was against the very nature of things when the enemy had been

liquidated and the Anglo-Soviet front had arisen across Europe.

In the hour of Russia's great peril, the Kremlin had concluded a pact with England, but when the defeat of Germany had begun to dawn on the horizon, the Kremlin commenced its usual procedure of interpreting the Pact according to the existing situation, passing from a friendly alliance to a more or less open dispute with England, placing demands which, in the event of their acceptance, would enable Russia to assume that position held here-to by Germany, i.e., territorially in the heart of Europe, and, when the destruction of the Reich had been accomplished, as the sole dominating Power of Europe.

At Teheran Stalin demanded half Europe as a ' zone of security,' i.e., ' frontier zone,' which, according to Russian standards, would at once be ' purged ' and reduced to impotency by eliminating every factor of strength, man-power and industry. On the other side there stood a Tory Britain, whose one desire was to finish the war with the utmost dispatch and turn again to enjoy her high standard of life ; that Britain who, having long ago satisfied her own desire for power and expansion, could repeat the words of Napoleon's Marshals, spoken during the invasion of Russia : " What are we seeking for so far on the East, we have great chateaux on the Loire, magnificent collections acquired during our expeditions, beautiful women waiting for us, and yet for years we have been sleeping in tents on palliasses of straw." That Britain was afraid to prolong the war after the destruction of Germany, afraid to grasp the sceptre as leader of Europe ; she felt herself incapable of this task. Europe seemed a burden beyond the strength of that Tory Britain and beyond . . . her will. She turned to America . . . but Roosevelt was endeavouring to convince Stalin how happy the world would be if only they co-operated. But which world ? A Capitalist or Soviet Communist ?—Russian ?

After three days of ' illness,' largely commented on in the World Press and House of Commons, Churchill gave ground and accepted Stalin's thesis of Russian leadership in Eastern and Central Europe. Agreement was finally reached. Europe was partitioned. Poland was left within the Russian ' zone of security.' And even more important still, the Russians were to enter and occupy part of the Balkans. Churchill bargained for and managed to retain Greece, for the protection of the Mediterranean, but of what, in truth, did this protection constitute ? The Germans had over-run it within a few days, and it would mean only a question of a few hours for a force of planes and air-borne infantry. And what was to be the ultimate fate of Turkey ? This and other heavy thoughts obsessed the leader of Britain. The Prime Minister was not over-anxious to hurry back to his country. He had to adjust himself to his new role as the Englishman who had just renounced the British leadership in Europe, and the creed of a lifetime, and who, from that very day, had to learn to profess diametrically the reverse.

The decision taken by Roosevelt was one of the most momentous in

the history, both of England and the world. Only the future would show whether he was right in turning on that road, as Sir Eyre Crowe had put it " paved with graceful concessions—concessions made without any conviction of justice or counter-services." And the first of these concessions was to be the abandonment of friends, Allies.

Alastair Forbes in the *Daily Mail* drew a remarkable picture of the events at Teheran :

" I had an uneasy vision of a large balloon carrying in its basket Marshal Stalin, President Roosevelt, and the Prime Minister.

" The balloon's course was erratic, and it appeared also to be losing height. However, Marshal Stalin stood up and was soon in command of the situation.

"As he addressed his two companions, I though I heard him saying that if the balloon continued to lose altitude he would have to bale out, but it would be preferable first to throw overboard some of the valuable cargo.

"Accordingly, Mr Churchill and Mr. Roosevelt began, a little reluctantly, perhaps, to heave over the side some cases variously labelled "Atlantic Charter," " Democracy," " Old Friends and Allies," " Four Freedoms," etc. After which the balloon began to gain height again, but appeared to be travelling backwards."

The outcome of the conference was announced in communiqués, meaningless in their gist and ornamented with the phraseology of the Kremlin. A few weeks after the Teheran meeting, the British Parliament, more from presentiment than realisation of the dimensions of the disaster, demanded a debate on the Atlantic Charter. The Government pleaded with Parliament to adjourn the discussion *sine die*.

General Smuts, the South African Premier, gave the most dramatic account of the events at Teheran His speech at the end of November, 1943, sounded almost like a cry of despair.

" We are, therefore, left with Great Britain and Russia. Russia is the new colossus in Europe—the new colossus that bestrides this continent . . . with the others down and out and herself the mistress of the continent, her power will not only be great on that account, but it will be still greater because the Japanese Empire will also have gone the way of all flesh, and, therefore, any check or balance that might have arisen in the East will have disappeared. You will see Russia in a position which no country has ever occupied in the history of Europe.

" Then you will have this country of Great Britain, with a glory and an honour and a prestige such as perhaps no nation has ever enjoyed in history, recognised as possessing a greatness of soul that has entered into the very substance of world history But from a material, economic point of view, she will be a poor country . . . she will have won (the battle) but she will come out of it poor in substance.

" . . You will have two partners of immense power and resources—Russia and America And you will have this island, the heart of the Empire and of the Commonwealth, weak in her European resources in comparison with the vast resources of the other two. An unequal partnership, I am afraid . . "

ON POLAND'S FRONTIER

The experience of the last five years has taught us only too clearly that sacrifices made by the Polish nation for the sake of Polish-Russian friendship merely weaken Poland without diminishing the imperialist tendencies of Russia Having convinced itself of the uselessness of the sacrifices made in 1920, the Polish nation will in no case agree to unilateral concessions. For it could not possibly put faith in the permanence of any fresh treaty of peace or of any new frontier determined by it, if the precedent set by Russia in unilaterally cancelling the Treaty of Riga and violating the frontier fixed by it, were allowed to go unchallenged

In 1920, we left about a million and a half Poles beyond the border, in the U.S.S R Now another million Polish citizens have been deported beyond the Urals, of whom about 115,000 left Russia in 1942, and are now in the Polish forces or in settlements for women, children, old people and other civilians. I hope that not more than one-third of those left behind have died of want, and that, therefore, about half a million are still alive. Are we finally to renounce them ? To-day the U.S.S.R. is putting forward claims to the whole of that part of Poland assigned to it by the Ribbentrop-Molotov Treaty This territory was inhabited by 5,274,000 Poles About 800,000 of these, together with about 200,000 Ukrainians and White Ruthenians, were deported into the interior of Russia in 1940 and 1941. The practice of the Soviet Government in the area of eastern Poland which it occupied from the end of October, 1939, to July, 1941, leaves no room for doubt that if the present territorial demands of the U S.S R were to be fulfilled, it would be equivalent to surrendering more than four million Poles, who were left in the Eastern provinces of Poland after the deportations, to the most ruthless extermination If the Polish nation agreed to that, in truth it would not deserve to survive

(Grabski, W , *The Polish-Soviet Frontier*, London, 1943, p. 35-36).

The results of the Moscow and Teheran Conferences and the subsequent resolutions concerning the territorial changes about to be effected, were not published and only filtered slowly through the Press. It was a few months before it became generally known for instance that, after the war Europe—not only Germany, but all Europe (except, perhaps, the few neutrals on her outskirts)—was to come under the occupation of the three Great Powers. The Russians were to stay in Poland, Rumania, Hungary, Czecho-Slovakia and in Germany as far as the river Oder, or perhaps the Elbe ; the Americans would occupy Bavaria, Wurtemberg and Saxony and the British the remainder of Germany. It could not be clearer —Poland after the war was to be in the hands of the Kremlin.

The secret agreements at Moscow and Teheran were explained by the subsequent policy of the Powers, or rather by the policy of the Soviets. As previously mentioned, the details of the decisions were still unknown to the public, and a general anxiety as to the future of Europe was bound to arise among those nations concerned. Moscow made the first move which revealed that she had been able to gain a free hand in Central Europe, when she concluded a Treaty with Dr. Benes, as ' President of

Czecho-Slovakia.' It was evident by this that the Kremlin was taking over the States within its sphere of influence as their 'protector and guarantor.'

The Czechs (a small nation numbering over seven million) had pro-Russian sympathies on the whole and were considered as the outpost of Russian imperialism in Europe and as reactionaries supporting Tsarist absolutism.

During the First Great War, they had divided their loyalty. Soldiers in the Austrian Army deserted en masse to the Russians, while at home they conducted the same policy as during this Second Great War by professing loyalty to the occupant.* As the favoured child of the Versailles Treaty, they were presented with Slovakia and Carpathian Ruthenia, although these countries had neither previously belonged to, nor were united with Bohemia. Despite the extension towards the East, there was still no possibility of the Czechs achieving a common frontier with Russia.

In this Second Great War, Dr. Benes, the Czechs' representative in the Allied camp, began his political campaign by acting in accordance with the British programme for the reconstruction of Europe, but when Moscow became one of the Allies, he changed the course of his policy to flow along Soviet lines. The Czechs' federation with Poland, which had been patronised by Britain, was thrown into the waste paper basket. Dr. Benes announced his intention of shortly concluding a post-war pact with the Soviet Union, which meant that he was leaving the camp of the Western world and hitching his wagon to the Russian star. It was a policy which complicated the future situation for Central Europe, and Britain of 1942-1943 showed herself to be far from satisfied with the premature political solution to this point on the part of Russia. London was left with two alternatives; either to allow Dr. Benes to go to Moscow and set up residence there, and so lose this pawn on its chessboard, or to hold a resentful Czech 'Provisional Government' in London until the war should further

* de Courcy, Kenneth, *Review of World Affairs*, April 28th, 1944:

There is, in fact, almost no resistance movement at all in Ruthenia, Slovakia, Moravia and Bohemia.

The Ruthenians are . . . anti-Russian.

The masses in Slovakia are anti-Czech and anti-Russian. The attitude of the Czech population is curious. Quite a number are now actually serving in the German forces, viz., in the 5th and 8th Jaeger Divisions, the 18th Motorised Division, and the 81st, 122nd, 225th and 290th Infantry Division.

Czech industry is most effectively supporting the German war effort and many workers seem very much to dislike the idea of risking the consequences of resistance.

The Czech clergy is largely supporting President Hacha, partly because of its anti-Russian views and partly because it fears anti-clericalism from the radicals abroad. All these facts are everywhere well-known on the Continent, and it causes astonishment to many friends of the Allies that they should be so little known in Britain and America.

War-Time Rationing and Consumption, published by the Secretariat of the League of Nations, Geneva, 1942, states that the inhabitants of Bohemia had the same ration as Germany (pp. 22-23).

clarify the situation. It was indeed soon to become clear, but in favour of Russia.

After the conference in Moscow, there seemed no longer any point in holding Dr. Benes in England when he was so anxious to offer his country as a vassal to Stalin. On December 12, Moscow announced the Treaty with Dr. Benes, in which the " close and friendly collaboration after the re-establishment of peace . . . " was mentioned. This Treaty had put Czecho-Slovakia at the mercy of Moscow to such a degree that the Russians did not even argue over the fate of the 700,000 Carpathian Ruthenians in the frame of the Czecho-Slovakian State. Moscow, who had claimed the Polish Ruthenians on racial grounds as the kin of the Ukrainians in the U.S.S.R., was apparently indifferent to this group of Ruthenian people, although the threat of the annexation of Carpathian Ruthenia was later to prove useful when the Czechs showed a reluctance to carry out the orders of the Kremlin. The ' union ' of Carpathian Ruthenia with the Soviets seemed hardly necessary at this point, when Dr. Benes had, in fact, subordinated all Czecho-Slovakia to Russia.*

The Russo-Benes Treaty, veiled in its vague clauses, gave little away. Afterwards in his message to the Czecho-Slovak State Council on February 3, 1944, Dr. Benes said that the time had not yet come to " examine concretely the matters " which were negotiated at Moscow, matters about which a " mutual understanding " had been reached. Amongst these ' matters ' was an agreement amplifying Article 4 of the Treaty, which had stipulated that the two Powers " shall develop their economic relations on the largest possible scale." The Czecho-Slovak industries, mines and sources of hydraulic energy were to be nationalised ; the Czech war industries were to work for the Russian and Czecho-Slovak armies ; war production was to be standardised so that it would conform with the Russian war production ; a new Czecho-Slovak Army was to be raised and, " in the future interests of Czecho-Slovakia," organised, trained and equipped after the Red Army standards. " In the interests of democracy and for the exirpation of German influences," educational (political) officers were to be introduced into all units. The Czecho-

* The policy of Dr. Benes' Government was a repetition on a larger scale of its policy during the First Great War, the most extreme points being more strongly underlined beneath the influence of a stronger Russia. Dr Benes interpreted this policy in connection with Poland in his book *Smysl Ceskoslovenska Revoluce* (The Sense of the Czecho-Slovak Revolution), Prague, 1924 —

In a war against the Central Powers (Germany and Austria) we need the Poles, and the reason for this war has compelled us to recognise Poland's rights. Endeavouring to have our rights acknowledged, we must acknowledge the rights of the Poles lest we ourselves morally lose our own. But, to give proof of our loyalty to our friends (viz , the Russians) we had to oppose their essential, anti-Russian policy There were moments when Russia, because of Poland, adopted a dangerous attitude towards the Allies. Briand had had to tear the first concession for Poland from Russia. In a short time, because of Poland and internal political reasons, the danger arose that Russia would even conclude a separate peace with Germany I state impartially, that the Allies were inclined to solve certain questions in a manner which was bound not to satisfy the Poles.

Slovak currency was to be stabilised in conformity with Russia Their railway, motor-roads and air lines were to be constructed to meet the economic needs of both countries. This Czecho-Slovakia of Dr. Benes, was to be nothing less, therefore, than the outpost of Russia in the centre of Europe, stretching practically as far as Bavaria.

In the above Treaty, Moscow was also clearly expressing its intentions towards Poland. The Protocol to this pact contained the clause :—

" The U.S S R. and the Czecho-Slovak Republic agree that, in the event of any third State which has common frontiers with the U.S.S R., or with the Czecho-Slovak Republic . . . desiring to become a party to this agreement . . it could be a tripartite agreement."

Moscow had no desire to make a direct proposal to the Polish Government, but the Soviet Press, together with the inspired World Press, were to publish many hints in this direction.

On December 17, 1943, *Dziennik Polski* in London gave a semi-official comment on the Polish Government's attitude towards the Soviet-Benes Treaty, stating that :—

" Poland had not, so far, been invited to participate. She attached fundamental importance to having friendly relations with Russia and regarded them as a vital element towards a broader solution and a system of general security The principles of mutual recognition of State sovereignty and of non-intervention in the State's affairs formed a basis for good neighbourly relations. Principles no less important for Poland should, however, be added to them. These were (1) liberty, independence, and integrity of the State ; (2) general security ; (3) loyalty to the alliances already concluded , (4) good-neighbourly relations with Russia ; (5) co-operation between the smaller European States, to protect them from German hegemony."

Polish reluctance to become part of so vaguely worded a Pact which, in the subsequent agreements, was to mean the absorption of the weaker partner, met with a wave of dissatisfaction from Moscow. Dr. Benes' Provisional Government was to be remoulded according to the designs of the Kremlin, and Communist Ministers were to be introduced into the most prominent positions. In Bohemia, the concluded Treaty encountered protests, not only from the constitutional Government of Hacha, which still existed, but from those people who did not want to change their present system of life into the Soviet order. Slovakia quite simply recorded that Dr. Benes did not represent their nation and had no right to conclude any agreement on her behalf.*

* Such was the Statement of the Slovakian Government and analogous with it was the opinion of the Slovak National Council in London, as expressed in their open letter to His Majesty's Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Anthony Eden (January, 1944). They stated ·

" It is against justice and against the spirit and letter of the Atlantic Charter to bind the Slovak people by international treaties concluded in their names and on their behalf by unauthorised negotiators whose chief aim is to get domination over Slovakia again. In view of all these facts the Slovak people cannot feel themselves to be bound by the Treaty signed in Moscow on December 12th, 1943."

The most important factor which united the German people in their struggle against the Allied forces during that period when, to the average German, the possibility of victory had finally disappeared, was the fear of the destruction of Germany as a nation. This fear connected with Russia, where the poverty and misery of the life had been seen by millions of German soldiers with their own eyes (an experience which Hitler claimed to be the best antidote for the Communist system), was a fear shared, not only by all those peoples who live East of Germany, but also by every State where the Red Army might penetrate; not only by Germany's satellites, but by the neutrals—Turkey and Sweden and even some of the members of the camp of the United Nations.

It must be taken into consideration that the tactics of 'fortifying' the occupied territories by forcing the Soviet system on the country, and the Russians' methods of exterminating the population, were without parallel in the memory of mankind. The application of these methods in that part of the Middle Zone which the Soviets had occupied in 1939-1940, so well known to Europe and so little known to Britain and America, served only to deepen this fear. The peoples, threatened by the possible arrival of the Red Army, visualised their future following the same course as that of the Poles, Estonians or Latvians—a future of decimation, with the remnants of the population dispersed throughout the Soviet Union, predestined to the cruellest poverty and famine, their children kidnapped, and those who did not die from starvation brought up as Russians.*

Hitler, in his speeches and German propaganda generally, had constantly returned to this topic; but, apart from anything else, the peoples of Central Europe, knowing Russia, dreaded her. They realised one essential fact which the happier nations, living far beyond the direct reach of Soviet Imperialism, could not grasp, namely, that the sting of Communist Russia is mortal. Any nation or part of a nation which comes within reach of the Soviet grip is lost. In former Tsarist times, the capability of the machinery of the State to undertake mass extermination was relatively limited; transport facilities were poor and the human being had a higher rateable value In the U S.S R, where millions and millions of bodies are available to replace loss of man-power, the contempt for the individual, the employment of demonical new methods and modern devices, have permitted the masters of the Kremlin to create a vacuum in any area within their vast Empire; to cut unwanted nations to the ground and dig out their very roots. By an unbridled campaign of terror, deportation, man-made famine, wholesale executions, they were able to destroy any national group within a few years. The example of the

* The all-pervading fear of the arrival of the Red Army and the N.K.V.D., resulted in the withdrawal from the Ukraine (together with the retreating Germans) of the Ukrainian intellectuals and people of all classes from Bessarabia and Eastern Poland in spite of the advice of the Polish Government The dread of deportation uprooted even that most stubborn element, the peasants, from the soil of their ancestors.

decimation of the Ukraine haunted the imagination of its neighbours. From this fear the next step was sheer desperation. Those among the endangered nations who had unwillingly supported Germany in her invasion of the Soviet Union, now whole-heartedly stood side by side with Hitler against a Red Army attack on their country. Russian demands, presented at the time when that Army was fast approaching those countries who had been ready to quit Hitler's camp, demands which included part of their territories, and contained additional clauses which would place them at the mercy of Russia, had the effect of once again frightening those countries into tightening their bonds with the Germans. Although the chance of success with Hitler was relatively small, surrender to Moscow, to whom the word ' mercy ' was unknown, meant—the end.*

Sure of its victory, the Kremlin used the language of threats, not promises, towards these German collaborators, and conducted its campaign under the slogan " No pity for Hitler's satellites ! " The net result of this policy was that the peoples of the Middle Zone, then bound to Hitler, could see no advantage in abandoning him. It meant a prolongation of the war and was contrary to the interests of the United Nations, but, as in the long run it would be advantageous to Moscow, the Soviets did not hesitate to pursue this campaign.

Poland, alone among the countries of Central Europe, resisted Germany. Her action spoiled the picture the Kremlin intended to present of a Europe which should be punished after its ' liberation,' and the Kremlin, therefore, did everything within its power to push Poland into Hitler's camp. A campaign of slander was instigated in order to convince the United Nations that, in point of fact, the Poles were already in that camp.

The situation grew more urgent and dramatic as the Red Army approached nearer the frontier of the Polish Republic. In anticipation of that advance, the Polish Government had issued an order to their Underground Army on October 27, 1943, " to avoid all conflicts with the

* *The Times*, May 2nd, 1944

The Germans have already achieved good results, as seen in the mobilisation of 40,000 in Estonia and 80,000 in Latvia while Hungary and Rumania have come wholeheartedly in the battle line . . . Germany's Allies are held in battle-array by fear—fear of Russian imperialism

Germany's grip on Eastern Europe to-day depends on this fear more than on anything else. Since the autumn the Germans have continued to harp on the theme that Russian terror, massacre, deportation, and national extinction is the sole alternative to a German victory, and it would be idle to pretend that this view is not widely shared at present in the countries concerned

The Germans still find Poland a hard nut to crack. In spite of serious efforts recently they have not succeeded in finding any Polish quisling, nor have they managed to raise any sort of Polish armed units to fight on their side . . . The Germans show that they keenly feel the presence of a large and elusive Polish underground army which frequently adds to their general disquiet by acting openly above ground.

The potentialities of this disciplined force are unquestionably affecting German nerves

Soviet armies " and " to enter into co-operation with the Soviet Commanders in the event of the reasumption of Polish-Soviet relations." Only an agreement between the two Powers could form the basis of any co-ordinated operations of the Polish Home Army with the Russian forces. Any such agreement would have to contain the most important of all clauses, namely, the setting up of a Polish administration in the reconquered provinces.

On the basis of an order issued by the Government in London, its representative in Poland issued a *Proclamation* on November 15, instructing the population on how to conduct themselves in the event of a Russian advance into the territories of the Polish Republic :

" On these territories," read the *Proclamation*, " the Poles have been living together for centuries with the Ukrainians, White Ruthenians and Lithuanians, all of whom benefited equally by the rights and privileges of a Polish citizen. The Polish Republic guarantees them henceforth and in the future all liberties and rights to cultural, economical and social development.

" In its steady withdrawal the German Army is ruthlessly destroying the provinces . . . I call on all citizens not to panic but to remain at their posts. Do not leave your villages and towns

" Every citizen must protect his house from fire and all buildings and public institutions which are necessary for the normal life of the community.

" There is the possibility that, in withdrawing, the German troops will take our youths with them in order to send them to forced labour in Germany, or conscript them into the German Army. It is the duty of all who are able to carry arms, to keep away from the roads of retreat of the Germans, and to seek shelter in the forests from any such attempts at kidnapping.

" The citizens of the Polish Republic should behave with restraint and in a gentlemanly fashion in the presence of the intruding Soviet troops. Remember, the Russians are the Allies of our Great Allies in the war against the Germans.

" On every portion of our Eastern land, even the most minute, which the Germans quit—the Poles, as centenarian co-landlords of these areas should, until the re-occupation of these lands by the legal authorities of the Polish Republic, protect all national property and remove all traces of German occupation.

" Perhaps the war front may temporarily divide us, but there is no force existing in this world which could divide and partition the Polish nation for all time. The necessity of a military defeat of Germany, the aim towards which we are all tending, can cause the presence of Soviet armies on our territories. Remember, however, that the Polish authorities will always be about you and a united Polish people is behind you

" . . . All citizens must perform their duty until the end."

On January 5, 1944, cables from Moscow informed the world that advanced Russian patrols had the day before crossed the Polish frontier near Olevsk in Polesie, somewhere about the middle of that frontier. In a short time a definite answer to the question, " What policy does the Soviet Union intend to follow, when it comes to occupy countries outside its own frontiers ? " was to be given.

The preliminaries had not looked at all favourable. After Teheran, in

the last months of 1943, Soviet propaganda had increased the scope of its abuse against the Polish Government, the President of the Republic and the C.-in-C., using the most violent language and constantly terming them " traitors, fascists, Allies of Germany," and announced that, " with the entry of the Red Army into Warsaw, a new Polish Government would be set up." Despite the unfavourable atmosphere and such adverse propaganda, the Polish Government decided to try a conciliatory move once again, in order to resume relations with the Kremlin, at that particular moment when the Soviet troops would cross the Polish frontier. The attitude of the Polish Home Army and the population towards the Soviet troops and the war on Polish territory would depend on the result of this undertaking. The Government issued the following statement on January 5 :—

" In their victorious struggle against the German invader, the Soviet forces are reported to have crossed the frontier of Poland. This fact is another proof of the breaking down of the German resistance and it foreshadows the inevitable military defeat of Germany

" It fills the Polish nation with the hope that the hour of liberation is drawing near. Poland was the first nation to take up the German challenge, and it has been fighting against the invaders for over four years at the cost of tremendous sacrifices and sufferings without producing a single quisling, and rejecting any form of compromise or collaboration with the aggressor.

" The Polish Home Army, among its many activities, concentrated upon attacking the Germans at their most vulnerable points, upon sabotage in every possible form, and the execution of many death sentences imposed on German officials whose conduct had been particularly outrageous.

" The Polish forces, twice reorganised outside their country, have been fighting ceaselessly in the air, at sea and on land side by side with our allies, and there is no front on which Polish blood has not been mingled with the blood of other defenders of freedom.

" There is no country in the world where Poles have not contributed to furthering the common cause. The Polish nation, therefore, is entitled to expect full justice and redress as soon as it is set free from enemy occupation. The first condition of such justice is the earliest re-establishment of Polish sovereign administration in the liberated territories of the Republic of Poland and the protection of life and property of Polish citizens

" The Polish Government as the only legal steward and spokesman of the Polish nation, recognised by Poles at home and abroad as well as by allied and free Governments, is conscious of the contribution of Poland to the war, and is responsible for the fate of the nation. It affirms its indestructible right to independence, confirmed by the principles of the Atlantic Charter, common to all the United Nations, and by binding international treaties. The provisions of those treaties, based on the free agreement of the parties, not on the enforcement of the will of one side to the detriment of the other cannot be revised by accomplished facts.

" The conduct of the Polish nation in the course of the present war has proved that it has never recognised, and will not recognise, solutions imposed by force. The Polish Government expects that the Soviet Union, sharing its views as to the importance of future friendly relations between the two countries in the interests of peace, and with a view to preventing German revenge, will not fail to respect the rights and interests of the Polish Republic and its citizens.

"Acting in that belief, the Polish Government, instructed the underground authorities in Poland on October 27, 1943, to continue and intensify their resistance to the German invaders, to avoid all conflicts with the Soviet armies entering Poland in their battle against the Germans, and to enter into co-operation with the Soviet commanders in the event of the resumption of Polish-Soviet relations

" If a Polish-Soviet agreement such as the Polish Government has declared itself willing to conclude had preceded the crossing of the frontier of Poland by the Soviet forces, such an agreement would have enabled the Polish Underground Army to co-ordinate its action against the Germans with the Soviet military authorities.

" The Polish Government still considers such an arrangement highly desirable At this crucial moment, the importance of which, for the course of the war and for its outcome in Europe, is evident to everyone, the Polish Government issues the above declaration, confident in final victory and in the triumph of the just principles for which the United Nations stand."

On the day following the issue of this Statement, the Polish Prime Minister, in a broadcast to his country, testified to the legal foundations of the Underground Authorities in Poland. On the question of Polish-Soviet relations, the Premier added :

" We should have preferred to meet the Soviet troops not merely as allies of our allies, fighting the same common enemy, but as our own allies as well. We demand respect for the rights and interests of the Polish Republic, its supreme authorities and its citizens, in any war situation and at any stage of the development of the international situation "

The same thoughts were expressed by the Underground Political Representation, who, in a telegram to its Premier in London on January 8, upheld his statement declaring that,

" the country is fully aware of the difficult and delicate situation engendered by the advance of the Soviet armies into the territories of our Republic without prior agreement and re-instatement of normal diplomatic relations with the Polish Government.

" The country is entirely in agreement with the Government in its endeavour to re-instate and uphold good neighbourly relations with Russia, but at the same time stand inflexible, and will so stand under any circumstances whatsoever, that the Polish eastern frontier as established in the Treaty of Riga should remain intact . . We are decidedly opposed to any bargaining over our rights to any part of the Polish territory."

The Statement of the Polish Government met with a mixed reception in the British and American Press, which shewed a tendency to appease the partner having the greatest force under arms.

On January 11, *Tass* published the Soviet Government's reply :—

"A declaration of the emigre Polish Government in London on the question of Soviet-Polish relations was published on January 5. It contains a number of incorrect assertions, including one about the Soviet-Polish frontier.

"As is known, the Soviet constitution established the Soviet-Polish border in accordance with the will of the population of Western Ukraine and Western White Ruthenia, expressed in a plebiscite which was carried out on a wide democratic basis in 1939. The territories of the Western Ukraine,

in which Ukrainians constitute the overwhelming majority of the population, were incorporated into the Soviet Ukraine, and the territories of Western White Ruthenia, in which White Ruthenians constitute the overwhelming majority of the population, were incorporated in Soviet White Ruthenia.

"The injustice committed by the Riga Treaty of 1921, which was imposed upon the Soviet Union in regard to the Ukrainians inhabiting Western Ukraine and the White Ruthenians inhabiting Western White Ruthenia, was in this way rectified. The incorporation of Western Ukraine and Western White Ruthenia in the Soviet Union not only did not violate the interests of Poland, but, on the contrary, created a reliable basis for a solid and permanent friendship between the Polish people and the neighbouring Ukrainian, White Ruthenian, and Russian peoples

"The Soviet Government has repeatedly declared that it stands for the re-establishment of a strong and independent Poland and for friendship between the Soviet Union and Poland. The Soviet Government once again declares that it is seeking to establish friendship between the U S.S R and Poland on the basis of solid good neighbourly relations and mutual respect, and—if the Polish people so desire—on the basis of an alliance of mutual assistance against the Germans as the main enemies of the Soviet Union and Poland. The realisation of this task could be served by Poland's joining the Soviet-Czecho-Slovak treaty of friendship, mutual assistance and post-war collaboration

"The success of the Soviet troops on the Soviet-German front, every day hastens the liberation of the occupied territories of the Soviet Union from the German invaders. The self-sacrificing struggle of the Red Army and the developing military operations of our Allies bring nearer the utter defeat of the Hitlerite war-machine and the liberation of Poland and other peoples from the yoke of the German invaders.

"The Union of Polish Patriots in the U S.S.R. and the Polish Army Corps, formed by them, which is operating at the front against the Germans, hand-in-hand with the Red Army, are already in this struggle for liberation. There opens up at present the possibility of the regeneration of Poland as a strong and independent State. But Poland must be reborn, not by means of the seizure of Ukrainian and White Ruthenian lands, but through the restoration to Poland of lands which belonged to her from time immemorial and which were wrested from Poland by the Germans. Only in this way would it be possible to establish trust and friendship between the Polish, Ukrainian, White Ruthenian and Russian peoples.

"Poland's eastern frontier can be established by agreement with the Soviet Union. The Soviet Government does not regard the 1939 frontiers as immutable. These frontiers can be modified in Poland's favour so that areas in which the Polish population forms the majority can be turned over to Poland.

"In this case the Soviet-Polish frontier could pass approximately along the so-called 'Curzon Line,' which was adopted in 1919 by the Supreme Council of Allied Powers and which provides for the inclusion of Western Ukraine and Western White Ruthenia in the Soviet Union.

"Poland's western borders must be extended through the incorporation into Poland of ancient Polish land previously wrested by Germany and without which it is impossible to unite the whole Polish people in its State, which thereby will receive the necessary outlet to the Baltic Sea. The just aspirations of the Polish people for their reunion in a strong and independent State, must receive recognition and support.

"The emigre Polish Government, isolated from its people, has proved incapable of establishing friendly relations with the Soviet Union. It has

also proved incapable of organising an active struggle against the German invaders in Poland itself. Furthermore, by its incorrect policy, it not infrequently plays into the hands of the German invaders.

"However, the interests of Poland and the Soviet Union lie in the establishment of solid friendly relations between our countries, and in the people of Poland and the Soviet Union uniting in the struggle against the common external enemy, as is demanded by the common cause of all the Allies"

The Soviet's Statement contained a number of incorrect assertions. It suggested that the "emigré" Polish Government was "isolated from its people" and that it had proved itself "incapable of establishing friendly relations with the Soviet Union." In opposition to this Government, the "Union of Polish Patriots in the U.S.S.R" was presented by the Kremlin as the embodiment of all the virtues which the Polish Government was supposed to lack Since the newspapers issued by this 'Union' spoke of Russia as their 'fatherland,' they, no doubt, stood in the best possible relation to that country but were, on the other hand, utterly isolated from Poland and the Polish people

The Russians adopted a new line in this Statement, camouflaging the 'Molotov-Ribbentrop Line' under the title of the 'Curzon Line'* According to the appraisal of the Kremlin, the whole affair would thus be more easily digested by the British and American public. Furthermore, the Statement also suggested that the "1939 frontiers," by which was meant that same 'Molotov-Ribbentrop Line,' "could be modified in Poland's favour in the areas with the majority of Polish population." Thus the Soviet Government itself testified that behind this 'Curzon Line' were areas containing a majority of Poles, and instilled doubts as to the 'plebiscite' which had been undertaken in those districts where, according to its figures, over 'nine-tenths' of the inhabitants had supposedly voted for the Soviets.

Another new idea in this Statement was that Poland should be compensated for the loss of her eastern provinces at the cost of Germany by the incorporation into Poland "of these ancient Polish lands previously wrested from her by Germany, and without which it would be impossible to unite the whole of the Polish people in its State, which thereby will receive the necessary outlet to the Baltic Sea."

The principle of compensation as forwarded by the Statement appeared

* Ivor Thomas, *Great Britain and Poland*, Liverpool, October, 1944, p 8:
. . . the facts about the 'Curzon Line' Actually, Lord Curzon had practically nothing to do with it. This point is not without importance, for great play has been made of the fact that Lord Curzon was notoriously anti-Soviet, and it might be supposed that any frontier he proposed could hardly be unduly favourable to the Soviet Union But he never proposed the 'Curzon Line' as a frontier. In an effort to find out the truth about this 'line' I naturally had recourse in the first instance to the official biography of Curzon by Lord Ronaldshay, but in all the three volumes of work there is no mention of the 'line.' It is mentioned in *Curzon: The Last Phase* (p 204) by M Nicholson, and this is what he says: "... Curzon himself had little to do with it" (i.e, with that 'line.') (See Vol. I, p 93).

rather ambiguous, although this principle was known in Polish history It had been applied in the Third Partition, when Austria had received the district of Cracow, as compensation . . . for Belgium, which she had lost to France. The Kremlin's proposal of compensation was not so much in order to justify the Russian annexation of Eastern Poland as to extend their rule to the banks of the Oder. In any case, the suggestion that Poland should lose about twelve millions of her citizens, Poles, Ukrainians, and White Ruthenians, and acquire in their place six or nine million Germans, seemed neither favourable nor inviting.

The figures showing the area and the number of the population of Eastern Poland between the frontier with Russia and the 'Ribbentrop-Molotov Line' have been mentioned above (see Vol I, p. 215). The area between that frontier and the 'Curzon Line' inclusive of Eastern Galicia, was a little smaller, namely, 70,007 square miles, 46 5 per cent. of the Polish Republic, with a total of 11,900,000 in 1939 (10,734,000 according to the 1931 census), of whom 4,464,000 were Poles, 4,431,000 Ukrainians, 987,000 White Ruthenians, 785,000 natives of Polesie, 946,000 Jews, 100,000 Russians, and 150,000 others (Lithuanians, Czechs, Germans, etc.) Corresponding figures for 1931 census were about 10.5 per cent. less for each nationality. The majority of people in that sparsely populated province of Polesie described themselves in every census as 'local people,' they considered themselves neither White Ruthenian nor Ukrainians nor Poles

The religious aspect of the position in all Polish territories east of the 'Curzon Line,' and of the latter's 'extension into Galicia,' was this:—Catholics of both rites, 56.7 per cent., Orthodox, 31 7 per cent., Hebrews, 9.9 per cent. and other denominations 1 7 per cent. The figures illustrating the religious denominations in Eastern Galicia were :—Catholics (of both rites), 88.7 per cent., Hebrews, 10.4 per cent., others 0.9 per cent.

The Soviets had also hinted that a great exchange of population should follow—the Germans to be sent to Germany, or (as it was later to transpire)to the forced labour camps in Russia,*while the Poles from theEastern province of Poland would probably be sent to Poland or to the Soviet Union. There was no mention here of those Polish citizens who had already been deported to Russia. There can be no doubt that, in the event of any option being given to the citizens in the Eastern provinces of Poland, at least 'nine-tenths' of the inhabitants who had passed through two years of the Soviet's occupation and regime would choose to go to a free Poland, although it was thoroughly devastated. At the time of Munich, German propaganda had asserted that Czecho-Slovakia

* The Soviet system, which uses forced labour to work in the most primitive of ways, was ceaselessly in need of an unlimited and continuous supply of manpower. Already the Moscow Government in 1943, had begun a preliminary propaganda campaign to obtain about 'one or two dozen million German workers' after the war for the reconstruction of Russia.

In the beginning of 1944, the Soviets had put forward the claim in the 'European Advisory Council' that the entire German Army should be "declared prisoners and re-organised into labour groups for reconstruction work in the devastated lands after the war" This claim . . was not even considered by the British and American Governments—who pointed out that they were bound by the Hague Convention, under which any such treatment of the German Army would be illegal . . . Russia is not a signatory of the Convention. *Observer*, May 7th, 1944

would be ' stronger ' by renouncing some of her territories for the benefit of Germany. The same argument was put forward in the Soviet Statement with regard to Poland, that she would gain through the ' incorporation ' of half her country into the Soviet Union.

Thus Moscow was reiterating her claims to Eastern Poland, openly demanding from the Polish Government what she had received from Hitler as part of her booty for supporting Germany, and stating that she would only be willing to negotiate with the Polish Government when that Government had given way to this demand. The proposal regarding the undefined indemnities at the cost of Germany and, in addition, the proposal to join the Soviet-Benes Pact meant that Poland would be pushed westward.

The Russian comments on their Statement of January 11 explained that their desire was based, not only on their general wish for better relations with Poland, but also "on the necessity of completing this treaty of mutual assistance, with its necessary detailed military arrangements." In the case of Czecho-Slovakia, the air bases in that country had been made " permanently available after the war to the Russian forces," and, since Moscow was expecting to receive the same freedom in Poland, a total subordination of that country under the pretext of a " renewed attempt of aggression by Germany " would thus be secured in advance. It was difficult to assume that similar concessions would assure the " high degree of co-operation between the military staffs " as stated in the Russian Press, especially as the Soviets were then simultaneously demanding a change in the existing leaders of the Polish Army, particularly mentioning General Sosnkowski, its Commander in Chief.

The Russian reply did not reveal any great enthusiasm, directly or indirectly, for entering into further discussion, neither did it show any eagerness to resume diplomatic relations with the Poles. It was the Soviet's intention first of all to determine their own attitude towards the Polish ' emigré ' Government in the light of that Government's reaction to their demands. " Moscow was prepared," said the Soviet commentator, " to give the Polish Government a chance to show its willingness to collaborate with them, even though they might prefer to see in Warsaw a Government formed by Poles already in Moscow, who understand their ways and agreed with their programme."

As a matter of fact, after the Statement, the possibility of any further discussion with Russia as far as the Polish Government was concerned, seemed to be closed for the time being. *The Times* suggested that Poland should give way to the Russian demands and thereby " gain their friendship." The Polish Press replied " it was impossible for any one to gain the friendship of another by allowing him to cut off his hand and leg, or for the State to renounce half its territories. Three times had Poland's body been subjected to similar amputations during the eighteenth century, and it had not contributed in any way towards changing Russia's

hostile attitude to one of friendliness towards Poland." The National Committee of Americans of Polish Descent, representing 6,000,000 Americans of Polish extraction, stated that " no Polish Government can accept the Russian offer, which amounts to the suicide of the Polish Nation."

The Soviet *Declaration* was far from ' conciliatory.'

" It is devised," wrote the Editor of the *Nineteenth Century and After*, " to accentuate the conflict, to increase the fearful pressure to which Poland has so long been subjected and force her to accept terms incomparably harsher than any terms which Great Britain and the U S.A. would think of imposing on a defeated Germany. The terms, if accepted, would mean the end of Polish independence

" The Russian *Declaration* is not mere propaganda, though it contains propaganda. It is not a mere statement of policy. It is a formidable political action, undertaken by one of the most formidable of Great Powers.

" The conflict between Russia and Poland does not concern the ' Curzon Line ' ; it does not really concern the frontiers of Poland or her demographic structure.

" The questions are not

" Shall her eastern border be shifted westward ? Shall she lose her eastern territories, or, losing them, acquire in their place western territories at the expense of Germany ?

" Beyond this, there is another question ! Shall Europe exist ?—the Europe we have known and hope to know again, the Europe which alone gives the war any meaning, a Europe that is a balanced and integral whole, the Europe of systems and ideas, varied and yet related, the Europe of many sovereign States, big and small, the Europe that is so much more than a geographical expression ; Europe, the stronghold of the Greeco-Roman and Christian heritage ? That is *the* question.

" Without Poland there can be no such Europe. That is why, in September, 1939, England and the Empire went to war The threat to Polish independence was a threat to Europe—and, therefore, to Great Britain and the Empire The threat to Polish independence is still a threat to Europe no matter whence it comes.

" Poland is an ally—the only ally that remained true when Great Britain stood alone, an ally whose fate is under the protection of successive pledges made by Great Britain. But the issue, now, is bigger than the future of Poland—it is bigger than the future of Russia, the future of Germany, the future of Great Britain The issue is the future of Europe, that is why all Europe is looking on."

The comments on Russia's reply were more or less uniform in Britain. The official British opinion was expressed by *The Times* on January 12 :—

" The first British official response after a first reading may be summarised in this manner :—whole parts of the Soviet statement—like parts of the Polish Government's statement of last week—are of a controversial nature ; it gives, in substance, the most important contribution to the study, it may be hoped, the ultimate settlement, of the difficult problems to which it relates." *The Times* began a campaign urging the acceptance of this ' Curzon Line,' while the British Press generally considered this ' Line ' as ' fair,' and expressed the hope that, if the Polish reply would be admissible the Polish-Russian dispute might be settled. The term ' emigre ' Govern-

ment as applied by the Russians was in itself humiliating, although the World Press did not seem to regard it in this light The British Press put forward the problem of recompense for Poland on the West and North and stated that " the Poles would want to be assured that the Russian suggestion that at the Peace Conference, Poland shall be given East Prussia and the whole of the Silesian region is endorsed by the Allies generally."

The Poles realised the full implications of the Soviet language, and were aware that the question of the ' Curzon Line ' was of less importance to Moscow than a ' friendly ' Government which would fall in line with all its wishes. Nevertheless, the Polish Government gave an answer to the Kremlin. This answer had been ' elaborated ' and ' agreed ' upon with London and Washington, and was published on January 15.

" 1. The Polish Government have taken cognisance of the declaration of the Soviet Government contained in the *Tass* communique of January 11, which was issued as a reply to the declaration of the Polish Government of January 5.

" 2. The Soviet communique contains a number of statements to which a complete answer is afforded by the ceaseless struggle against the Germans waged at the heaviest cost by the Polish nation under the direction of the Polish Government. In their earnest anxiety to safeguard the complete solidarity of the United Nations, especially at this decisive stage of their struggle against the common enemy, the Polish Government consider it to be preferable now to refrain from further public discussions.

" 3. While the Polish Government cannot recognise unilateral decisions or accomplished facts which have taken place or might take place on the territory of the Polish Republic, they have repeatedly expressed their sincere desire for a Polish-Soviet agreement on terms which would be just and acceptable to both sides.

" 4. To this end the Polish Government are approaching the British and United States Governments with a view to securing through their intermediacy the discussion by the Polish and Soviet Governments, with the participation of the British and American Governments, of all outstanding questions, the settlement of which should lead to friendly and permanent co-operation between Poland and the Soviet Union. The Polish Government believes this to be desirable in the interest of the victory of the United Nations and harmonious relations in post-war Europe "

On the whole, the British and American Press regarded the Polish answer as ' most encouraging ' and ' hopeful.' " The Polish Government," emphasised the *News Chronicle*, a paper which had hitherto never shown any great sympathy towards that Government, " has done wisely in refraining from polemics and seizing the opportunity offered by Russia's initiative." The British Press advised the Polish Government to bring to bear a policy of ' realism.' Half of Poland was at stake, however, and someone had to realise that its loss would affect the whole balance of the State and, together with it, Eastern and Central Europe The *Manchester Guardian* ironically commented that " the Polish Government in London is given the credit of having adopted a more realistic attitude, but its members do not appear to have received any indication of

how far they are expected to carry their ' realism ' in respect either of principle or of material consideration "

The Allied Press awaited the Russian reply with optimism But it was to come like a bolt from the blue. On January 17, the Government of the U.S.S.R. published the following short statement :—

" 1. In the Polish Declaration, the question of the recognition of the ' Curzon Line ' as the Soviet-Polish frontier is entirely evaded and ignored, which can only be interpreted as a rejection of the ' Curzon Line.'

" 2. As regards the Polish Government's proposal for the opening of official negotiations between it and the Soviet Government, the Soviet Government is of opinion that this proposal aims at misleading public opinion, for it is easy to understand that the Soviet Government is not in a position to enter into official recognitions with a Government with which diplomatic relations have been broken. Soviet circles wish that it should be borne in mind that diplomatic relations with the Polish Government were broken off through the fault of that Government because of its active participation in the hostile, anti-Soviet, slanderous campaign of the German invaders in connection with the alleged murders in Katyn

" 3. In the opinion of Soviet circles, the above-mentioned circumstances once again demonstrate that the present Polish Government does not desire to establish good-neighbourly relations with the Soviet Union "

Thus the Polish proposal to discuss " all outstanding questions " with the Soviets had merely evoked a " brief and brutal " refusal from the Kremlin, and a rebuke that " the present Polish Government " did not desire the establishment of good-neighbourly relations with the Soviet Union. The meaning of the Kremlin's reply was plain The *Spectator* suggested " that M. Molotov purposed to secure the overthrow of the Polish Government in London and substitute one composed, perhaps, of the ' Union of Polish Patriots ' in Moscow, more accordant with his own ideas." Lest any doubt should exist on this point, Moscow took pains to dispel them through the medium of the *News Chronicle* correspondent. " The differences between the London Poles," he wrote, " are not such as can be smoothed over. Russia believes that these Poles are aggressive nationalists . . . It is impossible to forecast what would be Moscow's reaction to a really radical reconstruction of the Polish Government in London. But time is getting short . . . If agreement is not reached, then the Red Army will march into Poland, restore order, hold elections, and recognise the new Government thus formed."

In the Moscow Declaration of October, 1943, " the Great Powers had reassured the small countries that they did not intend to use their armed forces to prevail their own creatures upon the liberated peoples," while in the Teheran Declaration they had sought the " elimination of tyranny and slavery, oppression and intolerance." But in the cable from Moscow's Reuter correspondent were the words ' that the Red Army would restore order in Poland.' This to the Polish people was reminiscent of 1831, of the bloody executions carried out by the Russians in connection with the

Polish revolt, when the Tsar sent his famous message to Paris, " L'ordre règne en Varsovie."

The American and British Press, sensitive to issues where principles were at stake, at length understood that it was not only Poland, but the principles of democracy which had become endangered—generally speaking, however, the majority and, in particular, the British Press, did not know how to react to this hidden danger and mainly limited their actions to verbal reconnoitring. The *Manchester Guardian* was the boldest in attacking the problem, stating that :—

" The British Government was not prepared for such a development, the Russian reply came as a severe shock to the British as well as to the Polish Government—the Russian comment on the Polish Declaration will cause severe disappointment among the Allies.

The Soviet's reply was more severely appraised in the weekly publications.

" Whatever the Russian intention," wrote the *Tribune* on January 21, " it is difficult to escape the impression that Moscow's policy tends to overstep the limits of a policy based on the respect of its neighbour's independence. This is no longer a matter of ' interference in internal affairs through revolutionary propaganda.'

" Russian propaganda to Poland is now nationalist, Catholic and reactionary in spirit and content. The interference assumes more and more the character of that sort of pressure and intervention in which ' Imperialists ' all over the world have been past masters

" If Russia means to force a ' friendly ' Government on Poland, then she acts no better than any Imperialist Government which forces its puppets upon a dependent country. Russia would then appear to its neighbour, not as a revolutionary Socialist country, but as an acquisitive Empire in which the old brutal methods of the Tsarist diplomacy have come back to life.

" In Russia's recent evolution there have unfortunately been only too many symptoms which point to a retrogressive trend. The conduct of the Russian Government in their conflict with the Poles gives ground for the worst misgivings.

" Has the International been discarded as the national anthem , has the Russian diplomacy put on the gold-embroidered gala uniforms ; have the ghosts of Suvorov and Kutuzov, the heroes of Tsarist Russia, been conjured up in order that the past, with its reactionary ideals of expansion at the cost of other nations, should be revived too ? If so, then the Russians cannot hope for any enthusiasm on the part of Socialists. If so, then Russia cannot even hope ever to establish a really friendly Polish Government in Warsaw . . . it is our Socialist obligation to raise our voice against attempts of the strong at trampling over the rights of the weak."

"An open return to the policy of Catherine II, the imposition on Poland of a government chosen by Moscow, a repetition of the Kuusinen imbecility of 1939—these are possible Russian policies," Professor D W. Brogan wrote in *The Spectator*. " What all her enemies will see in Russia's Note is not the desire to have Polish foreign policy defined, but the design to revive the policy of the successors of Peter the Great and control Polish policy by tolerating no Government in Poland except a puppet Government imposed as a prelude to partition."

Just at this time *Pravda* published its famous cable from Cairo to the

effect that Great Britain was negotiating a separate peace with Germany. It was a manifestation of the Soviet's hostility towards the British and, in particular, to Eden, whose role in the Polish Statement had been widely discussed in the Press.

London's *Daily Worker* gave its explanation of the move, pointing out that the most touchy problem of all was the Polish question :

" But it remains a mystery," wrote the *Daily Worker*, " why the British Government should have permitted itself to be manoeuvred by the Polish emigres into a position in which it appeared that, however indirectly—by the suggestion of mediation—the British and American Governments were in a loose sense ' going along with ' the Polish emigres in the policy expressed by the Polish announcement. The British Government can certainly have been in no doubt as to the attitude of the Soviet Government towards outside attempts at interference in the Polish-Soviet affair."

To all British and American proposals of mediation in the Polish-Russian dispute, the Kremlin had given a blunt refusal, declaring, on January 25, that " conditions have not yet ripened to a point at which advantage could be taken of this offer." The Soviet Press commented on these offers of mediation almost as if they were an offence. Stalin simply dictated terms " demanding Poland's surrender, and from Britain and America their agreement on the partition of that country."*

Might was to decide ! Already this idea had been proclaimed in the Soviet Press. *Pravda* and *War and the Working Class* came out with the statement that " owing to Russia's weakness in 1918, they lost the Baltic States, but at present, Soviet Russia is so powerful that she simply takes them back " A statement such as this was very far from the ideas expressed in the Atlantic Charter. The Kremlin explained its policy by pushing forward two principles. First Russia claimed that she alone had the right to settle her relations with her neighbours without the intervention of the other Allies, a statement which meant nothing less than that the problems of the countries between Russia and Germany were not international.† Secondly that in the countries concerned, ' friendly ' governments must be formed. Yet, even while in the act of putting for-

* Associated Press, July 19th, 1944.

† At the first opportunity, Soviet propaganda made the Kremlin's outlook over the affair of its neighbouring countries quite clear The victim of this explanation was Wendell Wilkie, the United States Republican Party leader who, in the *New York Times*, had raised the issue of the future of Russia's border States. In reply, *Pravda* published a ' vitriolic outburst ' of anger The article was headed : " Wilkie Muddies the Water," and described him as " an obedient mouthpiece repeating the outcries of the reactionary groups who fear the victorious advance of the Red Army and the armies of the Allies." " It is time to understand," says the article, " that the Baltic problem is an internal affair of the Soviet Union, with which Mr. Wilkie must not meddle

" Whoever is interested in the question had better familiarise himself with the Soviet constitution and the democratic plebiscite once carried out in the Baltic Republics, and remember that we are able effectively to defend our constitution. As for Finland and Poland, not to mention the Baltic countries, the Soviet Union can make necessary agreements with those countries, and does not need Mr Wilkie's help."

ward this demand to Poland, Moscow had simultaneously declared in its Press that it ' did not desire to interfere in the internal affairs of neighbouring countries ' After the secret agreement reached in Teheran, it was not difficult for the Soviets to assume that London and Washington, although offering mediation in the Polish affair, would not be too obstinate over satisfying Moscow's demand at Poland's cost. The Kremlin considered its position to be now so strong that it could reject the friendly offer, gratified with the impression which such a step would have on world opinion By asking the British and U.S. to intervene in their negotiations with Russia, and by mentioning this fact (with the consent of the two Powers) in their reply to Moscow, the Poles were aware that the fate of Poland hung on the ability of the Big Three to conclude some pact to stabilise the system of European security.

The Russian refusal to discuss the problem with Poland or with the Anglo-Saxon Powers violated the Moscow Agreement of October The Soviets turned down this opportunity of seeking an international solution to the Polish affair, preferring to adhere to the one-sided decision of dictatorship which, at its best, meant for Poland (that is, partitioned Poland) the role of a satellite, à la Czecho-Slovakia in the Hitler régime.

Despite the Soviet's answer, which clearly spurned the good offices of London and Washington, London refused to give up and tried yet once again Moscow must be convinced, even if it meant pleading with her Already, therefore, at this early stage London was obliged to make some promising suggestion to Moscow regarding this problem. Stalin, in reply to Churchill's letter, reiterated his demands and, according to the comments of the Soviet Press, even hardened his attitude regarding these " Polish proposals which postponed every real decision and offered none of the immediate guarantees which Moscow seeks as a preliminary to a settlement." Stalin again emphatically insisted that the Poles :—

(1) must immediately recognise the ' Curzon Line ' as the basis for frontier discussion with the possibility of some modifications, but with the firm indication that Lwów should remain with Russia. (Moscow, some time before, had hinted that perhaps Lwów might be left to Poland ; Stalin had agreed to this in any case, during his talks with General Sikorski). Poland was to receive (now it was more clearly defined than in the Soviet Declaration of January 11), the western and southern parts of East Prussia (leaving Koenigsberg* and its neighbourhood for the Russians), and other territories which she had claimed in the west, the remainder of Upper Silesia and parts of German Pomerania.

(2) An immediate call by the Polish Government on the Underground for full co-operation with the Red Army. Stalin was ques-

* Koenigsberg is a unique and valuable port of East Prussia, and in Russian hands meant that the full control of the Danzig gulf and the Polish Baltic sea coast would be in their power.

tioning the value of the Polish Government's published instructions to their Home Army, since this co-operation was conditional only on Russia's recognition of the integrity of the Polish territory . . .

(3) Stalin again insisted on the exclusion of the outspoken anti-Soviet elements from the Polish Government and changes in the leadership of the Polish forces, i.e., removal of the C.-in-C. General Sosnkowski, together with the Minister of War and Minister of Information.

Stalin, in his talk with Sir Archibald Clark Kerr, the British Ambassador, to whom he stressed his views on the contents of Churchill's letter, said : " The Polish issue might possibly strain the relations between Great Britain and Russia at a momentous juncture of the war. Russian public opinion could not reconcile itself to the amount of indulgence shown by the British towards Polish intransigence."*

The Kremlin's war-lord pointed out that, in the event of there being no agreement and the Red Army passing the ' Curzon Line,' the ' other people,' and not the ' present Polish Government,' would be entrusted with the administration of the ' liberated ' territories. These were unveiled threats. Stalin was ruthless in his demands, and in his endeavour to force the Polish Government to its knees. He did not wish further negotiations, although he was ready to parley with the Finns, who had supported Hitler, with Tanner and Mannerheim, whose artillery had shelled Leningrad. In the proposals offered to the Finnish Government, Moscow had agreed that the final fate of the Petsamo district would be settled at the peace conference, yet at the same time she was demanding an immediate transfer of Poland's territory to the U S.S.R. Difficult as this policy was for the Westerner to fathom, it was perfectly understandable to the Russians. In Finland's case, the Soviets did not have the power in their hands to press the Finns to the wall—this problem had to be settled by direct parleys but, where Poland was concerned, partners existed who were deeply interested in the ' straightening ' of the front of the United Nations.† Moreover, the Soviets were not particularly interested in the Polish consent, but only in receiving collaboration from their Home Army. In February, Churchill communicated the text of Stalin's letter to the Polish Prime Minister, asking him for an early reply. Mikolajczyk found that his Government would not be ready to give a reply to such a matter until the representatives of the political parties in the Government had consulted their respective underground leaders in Poland.

The Polish Government was not a free agent and, representing a democratic country, did not possess the right to dispose of any part of

* *Observer*, March 13, 1944

† The *Economist*, comparing the Soviet terms for Finland and Poland, wrote that " the Russian Press, with pride, emphasised that Moscow did not demand from the defeated enemy unconditional surrender," while the ultimatum with unconditional surrender was again presented to their Polish Allies.

State territory. It could also be expected that, in the event of such an action, the Government might be overthrown by the Polish people and a new one created in Underground Poland. The opinion inside the oppressed country was unanimous in this respect. It clearly stated " no concessions to the territorial claims of the Soviets." The Underground had authorised its Government in London to offer the advancing Red Army the support of the Home Army, a support which Moscow was so anxious to receive—but there the concession ended. A Statement on this subject was issued on January 15, 1944, by the Political Home Representation, which declared :

" In the Note of April 25, 1943, the Soviets severed diplomatic relations with Poland, giving as their reason the supposedly perverse attitude of the Polish Government over the Katyn affair. It was obvious to everyone that this was merely used by the Soviets as the pretext for a break-up of relations with Poland. Their object was to continue the campaign against Poland, the plan being to force her and her Allies into agreeing with their annexation of the Eastern provinces of the Polish Republic and to compel them to recognise the actions they had already carried out against the hundreds of thousands of Polish citizens deported from her Eastern territories and sent to Russia to be deprived of the rights of Polish citizenship and forcibly enlisted into the Russian Army.

" The Polish Political Home Representation states that the country is in complete unison with the attitude of the Polish Government over the conflict with the Soviets. The entire Polish people stand immovable over the question of the integrity of Polish territory, to defend which they had arisen in 1939. The Polish people, the first to stand up against and fight the Hitlerian storm, are constantly resisting the invader and are continually waging the struggle, sacrificing the life and substance of millions of their sons. And this struggle is being waged in order to restore the Polish State in its entirety.

" The Polish people understand the reasons for the policy of the Polish Government and their efforts to maintain good relations with Soviet Russia. But these relations must be founded on the full esteem of the integrity of Polish territory and the interests of the Polish people . . . "

The Political Representation had nothing to add to this Statement in February. Mikolajczyk* attempted to seek a compromise on his own account, and decided to take a step which led him beyond the concessions towards Russia authorised by the Underground. The idea of " preserving the Polish Government's place among the United Nations " was chiefly

* Mikolajczyk was the representative of the Peasants Party (the leaders of which had remained in Poland) in Sikorski's Cabinet and after the latter's death he became Prime Minister in the summer of 1944. Mikolajczyk followed Sikorski's foreign policy and sought a compromise with Russia at a cost and sacrifice, which even Sikorski and certainly his opposition had considered to be out of the question.

The Kremlin, who was opposed to any strong character holding the reins in the Polish Government or as head of the Army, was willing to agree that Mikolajczyk was the ' right man in the right place ' and one with whom they might conclude an agreement. This unusual consideration displayed by Moscow towards the head of another government was to go a step further when in order to play him off against his own Government they offered him the position of Premier in the " Polish " government composed from their agents.

responsible for this move There might also have been the hope that the Russians would refuse to negotiate on such a basis.

While the talks between the British and Polish statesmen were still in progress, the Kremlin launched an attack on the Polish Government in *Pravda* on February 12 which, in its violence, transcended anything hitherto published by that paper. The Soviets' impatience and anger over their lack of success in the discussion was obvious. *Pravda** wrote :—

" The emigre Polish Government and its servants wage no fight against the Germans, do not wish to wage it and cannot wage it . . .

" The emigre Polish Government, which includes Fascist political cheapjacks, has lost all sense of reality. It lives in a phantom world of Hitler mirage It has completely severed itself from the real Polish people, who are waging a relentless struggle against the German invaders and their Polish assistants The London Polish political cheapjacks have nobody to back them in Poland except the pro-Fascist agencies which are helping the Germans, and the simpletons they have misled.

"All Poles who value Poland's honour and independence march with the ' Union of Polish Patriots ' in the U.S.S.R "

The comment on this article, cabled by Reuter's correspondent in Moscow, contained an obvious threat to the Polish Government. " If *Pravda's* statement," wrote Reuter's correspondent, " were not a newspaper article, but an official accusation drawn up by the Soviet's public prosecutor, *all* Polish leaders incriminated therein would be liable to arrest if they ever set foot in Poland again."

Pravda's attack seemed to spell finis to any hopes of an agreement on Polish problems by way of negotiation, and meant that the Kremlin would now, without awaiting a reply from London, consider employing other means in order to settle this problem. The article was practically ignored by the Press of America and England The *Spectator* wrote : " The *Pravda* attack on the Polish Government, was a violation of all the decencies which nations banded against the foulest indecency the world has ever known are under plain moral compulsion to observe."

" The article in *Pravda*," as the London *Dziennik Polski* realised, " was not only directed against the Polish Government residing abroad, but against the Underground State within the country itself

" The (London) Government," *Pravda* has dared to write, " has no

* Incidentally, it is worth mentioning the role which *Pravda* (and every other Russian newspaper) played in the policy of the Soviets. *Pravda* is the official organ of the Communist Party, who ' anticipate, govern and command the State.' Yet in spite of this fact, the ruling Soviet circles, (officially the Kremlin), do not admit responsibility for the articles published in this paper When the British Government demanded an apology from the Soviet Government for the language and criticisms used in its newspaper in 1932, Moscow refused, declaring that she was only responsible for orders given by her Government and not for newspaper articles Yet on the other hand, as it transpired in the case of the recounted affair of the Polish newspapers in Britain, the Kremlin held not only the Poles, but the British Government responsible for the publications and demanded the suppression of certain of the newspapers.

insurgent organisation in Poland, but merely an 'organisation of Polish spies in the German service who are stabbing the honest sons of the White Ruthenian, Ukrainian and Polish peoples in the back . . .' The underlying threat in *Reuter's* correspondent's comments directed at the 'unget-atable' Polish Government in London, may be carried out against those who are even now fighting in Poland . . . The German terror is raging . . In the streets of Warsaw and of our other cities, the Germans have shot 7,000 people within the last four months How many others have perished during this time, from starvation or have been exterminated in concentration camps, and dungeons, we shall not know until later, but their number is not difficult to visualise.

" So Poland answers every day to the Hitlerite regime, by the action of those whom the organ of the Soviet Communist Party term 'the organisation of Polish spies in the German service.' The cup of Polish martyrdom is indeed full to the brim, it has suffered the crown of thorns and borne the cross of pain and now comes the lying slanders.

" Perhaps a storm cloud is appearing If the Polish Underground has to meet the same fate to which, according to Reuter's correspondent, the Polish statesmen are pre-ordained, the world would then be the onlooker at a tragedy, the like of which human memory cannot recall, and which the conscience of the people will not be able to face "

The Soviets had already used threats against the Polish underground for the supposed 'murder of Communists and Soviet partisans.' The Soviet radio stations and the *Daily Worker*, following their lead, had accused the radio-station *Swit*, which belonged to the Government's Representative in Underground, of calling on the citizens of Poland to fight the partisans.

" . . . this cry regarding the supposed murder of Communists in Poland by the Polish Underground," wrote *Dziennik Polski* on February 15, " is nothing more than the preparation of the world public for the bloody trial of the warriors of Underground Poland who have fought ceaselessly from the 1st of September, 1939, against the Germans This coming action has already been announced in Communist leaflets dropped in Poland."

On February 17, Mikolajczyk replied to Stalin's proposals As regards the frontier, he suggested the establishment of " a temporary line of demarcation for the Polish and Russian administrations for the duration of the war, with the towns of Wilno and Lwów remaining on the Polish side," and that the question of Poland's frontiers, both in the east and in the west, should be left for settlement until after the war, since, in accordance with the Polish Constitution, no frontier change could be considered without the consent of Parliament. As to the demand that the Commander-in-Chief and two Ministers should be dismissed, " no Government," ran the answer, " with any claim to independence could agree that a foreign Power had the right to dictate changes in its composition and military leadership . . . Such changes would come automatically in the event of the Polish proposals being accepted by Moscow—Ministers who were opposed to such settlements would obviously have to resign," commented the official Press. Simultaneously, the Polish Government

announced that the instructions which had been issued to the Home Army two months ago regarding eventual co-operation with the Soviet forces, were being enlarged upon and that the forces of the Home Army in the territories occupied by the Russians would also propose co-operation.

Dziennik Polski (The Polish Daily) in London, in its leading article, explained the Government's concessions along the following lines :—

" (1). Only among dictatorships can the government freely decide on the question of important state problems. The supposition that the government may dispose of state territory forms a part of Fascist ideology. Exclusively and only in democratic countries can the people legally decide on the forms of their state organisation

" (2). Such a decision (the renouncement of part of its territory) can be taken by a nation, only under the conditions of complete liberty. Any election under conditions of occupation without guarantee of secrecy and freedom could not be recognised as the expression of the free will of a nation and therefore it has no legal value.

" (3). The problem of the frontier is one of the factors in the life of the State. The realisation of the results of any discussion concerning this problem would follow after the war and would embrace every frontier of Poland. It is necessary to stress this point as, lately, in the British Press, voices have been raised defending the integrity of Germany.

" (4). The problem of Poland's frontier is international and cannot be settled in a bilateral discussion ' between ourselves ' and should be settled only by international agremeent.

" The eventual reconstruction of the Polish Cabinet cannot be the result of the demands of a foreign State. Poland in particular still recalling the painful memory of the activities of the Russian Ambassadors, Repnin and Stackelberg of the eighteenth century, cannot agree to such demands."

Moscow's disagreement with Poland was not merely a question of frontiers alone Above all else loomed the uncertainty of Polish freedom and independence after the war. The general opinion of the Poles was that, when the Red Army entered Poland, it would be able to act as it desired, and it was difficult to foresee any other Allied Power who would be in a position to hamper its activities. But, at any rate, those activities would not be carried out with the consent of the Polish people.

The decision of the Polish Government to grant a concession in the form of a proposed " demarcation line " behind Lwów and Wilno, did not receive the backing of Polish opinion, and the Government felt the need of issuing a special order to the Polish troops in the Middle East who were about to enter the war on the Italian front. Anxiety was felt that this decision of the Government might have some unexpected repercussions, particularly among those Polish soldiers who had already passed through Russian prisons and labour camps. Polish opposition had stressed the fact that the Government was over-stepping its prerogatives, and its Premier, Mikolajczyk, became the target for a great deal of adverse criticism.

STALIN'S POLAND

Goes it against the main of Poland, Sir,
Or for some frontier ?
(William Shakespeare, *Hamlet*).

Poland has shed her blood in that same cause of Right and Freedom for which we, in England, are fighting, and now, in the hour of her misfortune, we watch with admiration the indomitable will of her sons, wherever they may be, to fight on till the enemy has been defeated Though their country be trampled underfoot by the oppressor, the Polish people, who have struggled so long and so honourably for their national existence and independence, will, in the end, achieve their hearts' desire

(Winston S Churchill's letter to General Sikorski after his visit in 1940 to the Polish Forces in Scotland)

On February 22, 1944, the British Government, which until now had held the opinion that " all questions of territorial settlement should stand over until the end of the war," changed its viewpoint. This meant that the British Government which had pledged itself under Article 3 of the Treaty concluded with Poland on August 25, 1939, to support her, not only against armed aggression, but also against any attempt by a European Power " to undermine Polish independence by processes of economic penetration or any other way," announced of its own accord an agreement to the Soviet's plan in connection with Poland.

Referring to Polish-Soviet relations and the international situation in his review of the war, in the House of Commons on February 22, Churchill had said :—

" I took occasion to raise personally with Marshal Stalin the question of the future of Poland. I pointed out that it was in fulfilment of our guarantee to Poland that Great Britain declared war upon Nazi Germany and that we had never weakened in our resolve even in the period when we were all alone, and that the fate of the Polish nation holds a prime place in the thoughts and policies of His Majesty's Government and of the British Parliament. It was with great pleasure that I heard from Marshal Stalin that he, too, was resolved upon the creation and maintenance of a strong, integral, independent Poland as one of the leading Powers in Europe. He has several times repeated these declarations in public and I am convinced that they represent the settled policy of the Soviet Union.

" Here I may remind the House that we ourselves have never in the past guaranteed, on behalf of His Majesty's Government, any particular frontier line to Poland We did not approve of the Polish occupation of Wilno in 1920. The British view in 1919 stands expressed in the so-called ' Curzon Line ' which attempted to deal, at any rate, partially, with the problem. I have always held the opinion that all questions of territorial settlement and readjustment should stand over until the end of the war and that the victorious Powers should then arrive at formal and final agreements governing the articulation of Europe as a whole.

" That is still the view of His Majesty's Government. However, the advance of the Russian Armies into Polish regions in which the Polish underground is active, makes it indispensable that some kind of friendly working agreement should be arrived at to govern the war-time conditions

and to enable all anti-Hitlerite forces to work together with the greatest advantage against the common foe. During the last few weeks the Foreign Secretary and I together have laboured with the Polish Government in London with the object of establishing a working arrangement upon which the Fighting Forces can act, and upon which I trust an increasing structure of good-will and comradeship may be built between Russians and Poles.

"I have an intense sympathy with the Poles, that heroic race whose national spirit centuries of misfortune cannot quench, but I also have sympathy with the Russian standpoint. Twice in our life-time Russia has been violently assaulted by Germany Many millions of Russians have been slain, and vast tracts of Russian soil devastated as a result of repeated German aggression Russia has the right of reassurance against future attacks from the West and we are going all the way with her to see that she gets it, not only by the might of her arms, but by the approval and assent of the United Nations. The liberation of Poland may presently be achieved by the Russian armies—after these armies have suffered millions of casualties in breaking the German military machine. I cannot feel that the Russian demand for a reassurance about her Western frontiers goes beyond the limit of what is reasonable or just. Marshal Stalin and I also spoke and agreed upon the need for Poland to obtain compensation at the expense of Germany both in the North and in the West."

A few days prior to the outbreak of the March revolution in Petrograd, during the First Great War, the Tsarist Government had received a telegram from Paris in which the French Government agreed to the Russians intentions of defining their western frontier at the cost of the enemy—Germany. The same period of time, two and a half years, was to elapse in the Second Great War before Russia's western partner agreed to the demands of that country, and, on this occasion, it was . . . at the cost of another ally. In 1917, the French Government had informed Petrograd by telegram; why the British Premier chose the medium of public speech to announce the change of views of the British Government in 1944 can only be surmised. Neither Britain nor the United States, as Eden and Cordell Hull both declared, "had made any commitments either at Teheran or Moscow to limit or exclude" British and American "interest in certain parts of Europe." Already on December 15, 1943, questioned in the House as to whether there was any secret understanding in Teheran, Eden had answered promptly :—

"I can also tell the House, lest there is any uneasiness about it, that we have not entered into any kind of secret engagement or treaty or anything which can cause anyone a sleepless night or a sleepless hour, and the Hon Member need not have any fear that the movement of power has been from him to the Treasury Bench. I can give this undertaking, that as long as I have anything to do with the conduct of the Foreign Office, if I make an engagement I shall come and tell the House at once, which is the constitutional practice, and, if they do not like it, they can turn me out."

And again on February 23, Eden assured the House in the terms that admitted of no equivocation that they "had not agreed to any sphere of influence," they had accepted no barriers, and they "were absolutely

free to interest themselves in the affairs of all nations of Europe and no spheres of influence had been agreed to by anyone."

That the British Government felt impelled to publish its change of policy at this particular juncture and recognise the territorial claims of the Soviets was all the more surprising, since as it publicly claimed, they had agreed to shelve such claims until the peace conference. The pressure of the war situation and the circumstances which had compelled the British Government to take such a step, were not familiar to Parliament, who did not entirely agree with the ideas expressed by its Premier, so contrary were they to the course which he had hitherto steered.

In their talks at Teheran, both the British Prime Minister and Stalin had assured each other that Poland was to be 'independent.' But this 'independence' held entirely different meanings for the two men. Judging by previous experience, it could be assumed that, within a few years, Stalin's Poland would be analogical to the Soviet Ukraine, i.e., several million people would probably die, half the Polish ethnographical block would be cut off and dispersed throughout the depths of Asia. The Great Russians and that mixture of many nationalities composing the Soviet Union would flood the country. This liquidation of the thirty-five million of Poland's inhabitants would present no more difficulty to the Soviets than had the liquidation of the thirty million inhabitants of the Ukraine.

Moscow's reaction was summarised by the correspondent of Associated Press, who cabled :

" The Soviet people who read Mr. Churchill's prominently-reported speech, regarded his references to Poland as meaning that Britain was in full accord with the Soviet policy, and saw an early abandonment of the Polish Government in London.

" Moscow political observers said that Mr Churchill's speech should settle the Polish question, provided the United States took a similar view. This was assumed, as Mr. Churchill had indicated that his point of view was taken at Teheran after discussions with Marshal Stalin. This the Russian people took to mean that Mr. Roosevelt was also present "

But did President Roosevelt hold similar views ? From the moment when the United States had entered the war, Washington was to maintain an unbroken silence over the affair of Europe, and after Teheran, this silence grew more significant.

" Twice in our life, Russia had been violently assaulted by Germany . . . Russia has the right of reassurance against future attacks from the West . . . " said Churchill. Every nation had the right to such a reassurance. It was not only Russia, however, who had been assaulted. France had seen the Germans on her soil three times within the lifetime of the older generation, while Poland twice, in twenty years, had been assaulted by the Soviets and annihilated by the common effort of Germany and Russia. " One can have the impression that it was Poland who had invaded Russia, occupied the greater part of her territory, established a

cruel régime and deported millions of Russians into forced labour. In fact, it was the reverse," wrote W. Chamberlin, the expert on Russian affairs, in the *New Leader* on March 4. " Then who should be guaranteed and against whom? Poland and Finland against Russia or the Soviets against their small neighbours? "

The argument that the Soviet Empire was to be " reassured against future attacks from the West . . . " by removing a frontier from one place to another or annexing a strip of territory, less than one per cent of the Soviet's own Empire, could convince only those who wanted to be convinced. This reason employed by Churchill was subjected to the strongest of attacks in the World Press, which pointed out that such arguments could equally justify the removal of the Soviet frontier to the Oder, Rhine or even the Atlantic Ocean.

Churchill's " very cautiously worded speech " was in a vein not to arouse " the hostility of many people " It contained one striking statement, however, which raised a query as to why it had been made? Namely, " the British view of 1919 had been expressed in the so-called Curzon Line." This so-called ' Curzon Line ' was proposed in 1920 as a ' zone 50 km. wide ' to the East of that ' Line,' but since both sides concerned were completely disinterested in this ' Line ' (which originated in Paris and was not even created by an Englishman), it was never to get further than the stage of being mentioned in the dispatches.

In 1919 the British Government had held no settled opinion as to where the western frontier of Russia should be fixed. That country was then trembling under the spasms of a great conflagration and London, waiting on the issue of the Civil War, and intervening in the meanwhile with her armed forces in Russia, realised that the frontier which they had been ready to recognise for Tsarist Russia must be different to the one which they could recognise for the Bolshevik régime. In the event of a victory of the old régime, Britain had had no wish to become uselessly involved in an argument over the western frontier of Russia, since along with France, she still had to take into consideration the commitments she had given to that régime, and the eventual compensation for Russia's renouncement of her claims to the Turkish Straits as promised by the Allies in the secret Treaty of 1915

The attitude of the Allies towards the Bolsheviks at that time was well-known—there was war between them. The Supreme Council of Allied Powers, in authorising the Polish Government on June 25, 1919, to take over Eastern Galicia, asked it to " safeguard the integrity of persons and property of peace-loving population . . . against danger arising from Bolshevik gangs."

Urged by the Polish Government and awaiting the outcome of the war, the Supreme Council of the Allies had in the interim on December 8, 1919, recognised Polish administration west of the Eastern frontier of the Polish

Kingdom of the Vienna Congress of 1815. The rights of Poland regarding " territories to the East of that line " were "distinctly reserved."* It was clear that should the Soviets prove victorious in the Civil War, Britain intended to push them as far Eastward as possible.

In such an event, the idea of the dismemberment of Russia would have been welcomed by the Western Democracies. With this in mind, they did not immediately confer Eastern Galicia to Poland, since they hoped it could be part of an independent Ukrainian State extending from Lwów to the Caucasus. Fear of a victorious Communism was to effect the issue, and Germany was given grace ; simultaneously, however, there was great alarm in the camp of the Entente at the prospect of a German-Soviet rapprochement The post-Versailles British Ambassador in Berlin, Lord d'Abernon, reviewed the opinion of the British rulers, writing :—

" It was apparent to those who took a world view that Western civilisation was menaced by an external danger which, coming into being during the war, threatened a cataclysm equalled only by the fall of the Roman Empire. This danger arose from the sweeping success in 1917 of the revolution against the Tsarist regime and the establishment in Russia of a fanatical Communist Government . . . there is little doubt that a blind persistence in the policy of maintaining the war grouping of the Allies against Germany would eventually have led to Germany being forced into close alliance with Russia . . An Asiatic revolt under German direction against established institutions and supported by German industry and science may be considered an unnatural combination. But were it to come into being, the danger to European civilisation would be dire in the extreme . . . In the presence of such (Communist) forces no solution of the European problem could be tolerated by English statesmen which threatened the exclusion of Germany from the European combination and left her a prey to Russian wiles and Russian influence . . . "†

When Poland survived the Red invasion and not only survived, but arrested the invader, it was Churchill in England who wrote the following enthusiastic account. " The condition of the Dark Ages had advanced from the Urals to the Pripet Marshes, but there it was written ' so far and no further.' "

After the Soviet régime had been established in Russia, the London diplomats came to the conclusion that it was pointless to wait any longer

* *Declaration of the Supreme Council of the Allied and Associated Powers.*

Les principales Puissances alliées et associées, ayant reconnu qu'il importe de faire cesser le plus tôt possible l'état actuel d'incertitude politique dans laquelle se trouve la nation polonaise, et sans préjuger des stipulations ultérieurs devant fixer les frontières orientales définitives de la Pologne, déclarent reconnaitre dès à prêsent le droit du Gouvernement polonais de procéder, dans les termes précédemment prévus par le Traité du 28 juin 1919 avec la Pologne, à l'organisation d'une administration régulière des territoires de l'ancien Empire de Russie situés à l'ouest de la ligne ci-dessous décrite (voir la carte). . .

Les droits que la Pologne pourrait avoir à faire valoir sur les territoires situés a l'est de la dite ligne sont expressément réservés.

Fait à Paris, le 8 décembre, 1919.

Le president du Conseil Suprême des Puissances Alliées et Associées,

G Clemenceau

† *The Diary of an Ambassador : Versailles to Rapallo,* 1920-1922, New York 1929, p. 21.

for a return of the Tsars to the Romanov throne, and in 1923 the Foreign Secretary, Lord Curzon, had initiated and, on the basis of Versailles Treaty, Britain, with the Allies, had acknowledged the Polish-Russian frontier and the Polish-Lithuanian frontier. They acknowledged that Wilno belonged to the Polish Republic. Sir Eric Phipps signed for Britain. It was the British view regarding those frontiers expressed officially for the first time "I rejoice," Churchill emphasised in the Commons on April 13 of that year, "that Poland has been reconstituted. I trust she will live long to enjoy the freedom of the lands which belong to her, a freedom which was gained by the swords of the victorious Allies."

This was said over twenty years ago. And at the end of those twenty years "the freedom of the lands which belong to her" was endangered by those same Communists Churchill had fought against for so many years. Furthermore, it was the same Churchill who now, it seemed, entertained a "sympathy with the Russian standpoint" and who emphasised that he "cannot feel that the Russian demand for a reassurance about her Western frontiers goes beyond the limit of what is reasonable or just," and—irony of fate—was, in effect, giving his consent to the advance of the "conditions of the Dark Ages to behind the Pripet Marshes," to behind the frontier of Poland. It was the same Churchill who now supported the idea of an 'unnatural combination,' of German industry under Russian direction. It was not so long before, on March 21, 1943, while expressing the British views on the 'new order' and envisaging a 'Council of Europe,' the Prime Minister had given a warning that Britain "will have to reach agreement with great and friendly equals and also to respect and have a care for, the rights of weaker and smaller States, and that it will not be given to any one nation to achieve the full satisfaction of its individual wishes." By February 22, 1944, this Statement seemed already out of date; the British Premier had agreed to the 'full satisfaction' of the wishes of one of those Great Powers, and, upon the first disposition of those wishes the *Observer* harshly commented:

"Mr. Churchill's Government has travelled far since the days when it was ready to fight 'If necessary for years, if necessary alone,' against a Germany in the full flush of her conquering power, and an unbeaten Italy, with America resolved to keep out of war, and Russia still neutral. 'Not one jot, not one tittle, do we renounce of our just demands,' was Mr. Churchill's message at that time, and in speaking so, he spoke for the nation Mr. Churchill still speaks for the nation when he puts its much-maligned effort and its much-be-littled sacrifices on record. He ceases to do so when he begins to limit the principles for which these sacrifices are made.

"For the citizens and citizen-soldiers of this country have not travelled with their Government from idealism to cynicism They are still the people of 1918. For them the authentic war-aim is still to end the war, to make the world safe for democracy; and to secure freedom from want and fear for all."

The day after Churchill's speech, Poland replied through the medium of her C.-in-C., General Sosnkowski, in his address at a ceremony held

at a Polish Air Force station, where he was conferring military decorations. General Sosnkowski confirmed the report that instructions had been given to the Underground Forces to co-operate with the Red Army. He said .—

" Within the limits of loyalty to our country, we have done everything to secure good relations with Russia, since discord among the United Nations is the enemy's only remaining hope Recently, in connection with the war developments, the leaders of the Polish Underground Forces were instructed to approach the commanders of the Red Army entering Poland with a proposal for an understanding on the subject of co-operation in the war against Germany, thus giving proof of our good-will and asserting the Polish Republic's unquestionable rights to its own territory. The outcome of this initiative depends on whether the Soviet Government will respect the legal status of the Polish civilian and military authorities, who have now revealed themselves in Poland.

" Some of you may feel bitter about the great sacrifices Poland has made in this war A note of pain and irresolution must creep into your hearts and a doubt as to whether the bloodshed has been in vain. I hear a grave mute question on your lips, tormenting you in the face of those thousands of graves in which sleep your comrades-in-arms who fought and died in the belief that they were fighting and dying for all Poland, for Warsaw and Poznan, Cracow and Gdynia, Wilno and Lwow We took up the fight against Germany and have been fighting for more than four years for freedom and for the integrity and security of our country. *No one* can expect us to sacrifice our rights. The immense sufferings of mankind will have been in vain if this war does not result in the just punishment of the guilty and in the triumph of freedom, right and justice for all nations of good will.

" In these most difficult moments through which our country is passing, we, the warriors of her liberation, have no right to lose our faith in the future or in our victory We must be confident that the conscience of the world will once more awaken We must maintain discipline and imitate our country, which unquestionably will fight to the end. Together with our Allies we shall fight until we have exhausted every possibility of serving our country in this way, rejecting all offers of serving any foreign interests, or for foreign state reasons which are incompatible with Poland's rights and independence "

Was the speech of the British Premier to be taken as an attempt by Britain to retire from her commitments towards Poland, and as her consent to the dismemberment of Poland Due to the methods of extermination as applied by the Soviets, this dismemberment could only mean the death of the Polish nation The carcase of State which would remain to Poland would have the Russian frontier about 150 miles from Warsaw. It would then be in a similar position to Czecho-Slovakia's after Munich. The proposed ' compensatory ' acquirements of Poland's, at the cost of Germany,* were to be, roughly, a quarter of that which she was to lose to

* Eastern Poland to the 'Curzon Line' comprised of an area of 70,000 sq. miles, while East Prussia—14,250, Danzig 422 and Upper Silesia 3,751 sq miles. The Soviets laid claim to approximately one-third of Eastern Prussia, namely Koenigsberg with its surroundings East Prussia had a population of 2,300,000 (over 300,000 of them were Poles), in Upper Silesia—1,480,000 (800,000 were Poles) and in Danzig—400,000 inhabitants (10 per cent. Poles).

Russia on her Eastern frontier. Such a carcase could not live under the pressure of Russia. It would be a repetition of the case of the Polish Kingdom established at the Vienna Congress in 1815, under a Russian 'protection' and 'Allied guarantee,' which survived no more than fifteen years.

The liquidation of Poland would mean the liquidation of all her neighbouring States, having common frontiers with the Soviet Union, such as Finland, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania and Rumania, while Czecho-Slovakia, Hungary, Austria, Bulgaria and Yugoslavia could hardly remain independent if practically all the surrounding countries had become the satellites of one Great Power.

The Soviet Union would reach Germany—Lenin and Stalin's dream would be fulfilled. The " revolutionary shake-up of Europe . . . " as Stalin had prophesied long ago, " would begin . . . Russian revolution will awaken the German revolution " and " the victory of a revolution in Germany is a full guarantee of victory in the international revolution."

In its leading article on February 24, *Dziennik Polski* gave a semi-official comment on the speech of the British Prime Minister, stating :

" The thesis of the real independence of the Polish State is irrefutably one of the defined points of the British policy and of its leaders. But where it concerns the ways in which to secure Poland's true independence, there is, between the British Government and the British Premier on one side, and the Polish Government on the other, an essential difference on the most important points at issue. The acknowledgment of the truth of this statement is painful to the Poles, but nevertheless it is an acknowledgment which cannot be hidden . . . The recognition of the Polish-Soviet frontier by England had its place in 1923, at the time when Lord Curzon had been Britain's Foreign Secretary . . . Premier Churchill had emphasised the Wilno problem It is necessary to remember that in the Wilno district the majority of the people were Poles and even the Germans during the Second Great War, as during the First Great War, recognised on the basis of a census, that Wilno contained an overwhelming Polish majority.* These are historical facts and come from non-Polish documents at that.

" The Polish Government, firmly established as to their rights as contained in these historic facts and allied documents, rejected this ' Curzon Line ' offered as the future Polish-Soviet frontier . . . We must declare with all emphasis that the deprivation of Poland's territory and 12 million

* Out of 195,000 inhabitants in the City of Wilno in 1939, 128,800 were Poles, 54,600 Jews and only 2,000 Lithuanians. After the extermination of the Jews, carried out under German occupation and according to the census published in January, 1944, which concerned the year 1943, there were 144,531 inhabitants in Wilno. Those peoples fell into the following categories : Poles, 102,483 (70.9 per cent), Lithuanian 31,378 (21.7 per cent.) ; White Ruthenians 3,015 (2 1 per cent.), and others 5 3 per cent.

The increase in the number of Lithuanians which was revealed in 1944 was an outcome of the influx of Lithuanian civil servants, police and military, all of whom were embraced by the census of the population. The Polish census taken in 1939 had not included the troops

In the Wilno province 845,700 (66 9 per cent) of the 1,263,300 inhabitants were Poles and after the disappearance of the Jews, the percentage of Poles increased to 75 per cent.

(Wilno, see Vol. I, p. 219).

of her inhabitants for the sake of the other partner of the United Nations, cannot be recognised by the Polish nation as an act of justice, or help to stabilise the Polish-Russian relations on a friendly and peaceful basis . . .

" The Polish people survey this problem . . . there is the demand that Poland should renounce concretely half of her territory (that is, her own property) for the benefit of the Soviets, while she (Poland) is given only a promise of gaining certain territories of the Reich at some unknown time. Concurrent with this promise, the Soviets are extending their hand for part of East Prussia, including Koenigsberg, an unspoken danger signal for Polish policy.

" Yet, in spite of all this, in spite of the demand that Poland should agree to the loss of her eastern provinces, linked with her so tightly by tradition, patriotism, culture, work and sacrifice, in spite of the blow which strikes into the deepest recess of the Polish soul . . . the Polish nation will fight . . . with a faith that this war will result in the straightening out of not one, but all the political knots and, finally, that the true and noble rules of justice, for weak and strong alike, will rule in the camp of the United Nations."

The Polish Government confined its reaction against the speech of the British Prime Minister to a demarche in the Foreign Office. Loud protests were heard from among the Poles in the U.S.A. and the Polish Members of the Congress, who sent protests to the Speaker of the House of Commons and to the British Prime Minister, declaring the Prime Minister's Statement on the ' guarantee to the Polish frontier ' and the Russian demand ' for reassurance ' at the cost of Poland, to be inconsistent with the British-Polish Treaty, confirmed by the British Parliament in 1939, and that it radically altered the war-aims of the United Nations as worded in the Atlantic Charter.

" Shall that Polish nation whose every tenth citizen gave his life fighting German totalitarianism in defence of his freedom and honour, become again the prey of violence, greed and injustice and suffer the loss of half its territory ?

" In one of your most memorable and best-known speeches, you interpreted your duties as His Britannic Majesty's Prime Minister, declaring that you did not take over that illustrious post in order to preside at the dismemberment of the British Empire. It was the more surprising to us when, in your recent speech, you gave the impression of being ready to allow the dismemberment of Poland.

" It is idle for anybody to deny mutual British-Polish Treaty obligations. The Polish people did well understand and thoroughly fulfil their share of those pledges when, together with their British Allies, Polish soldiers fought in defence of England and of the British Empire. As to the English side, it is worth remembering, Mr. Prime Minister, that when in 1939, through her noblest representatives, Britain signed her Treaty of Alliance with Poland, she did conclude that agreement with Poland of her 1939 boundaries, in defence of which millions of Poles have died and are dying. It was indeed not a Poland with boundaries defined by her enemies, who were also your erstwhile foes and whom you cannot now appease at Poland's expense.

" Nobody can wipe out Britain's obligations to Poland from the conscience of the British people and of the gallant British Army . . No one can do this as long as the graves of Polish fliers killed in action over England are not removed from British soil."

A few weeks later, on March 15, the Polish Underground, which had in the meantime expanded its Political Representation to include all existing parties, issued a *Declaration*, in which was explained the basis of Poland's policy and aims. It can be quoted also as the most authoritative answer on the Stalin-Churchill proposal regarding the partition of Poland. It read :

" The struggle still continues. The story with our country's eternal foe from the West is not yet finished. And yet in spite of our country's vast contributions to the cause of the democracies of the world, in spite of her four years continuous fight with the bloody occupant of her land, a hand from the East has reached out for Poland's eastern provinces. And more, even the brain behind that hand is endeavouring to force its method of ruling on to the Polish nation "

" On the East of Poland, the frontier established in the Riga Treaty must be preserved . . The people of Poland believe in the victory of right and justice and decidedly reject any thoughts of territorial concessions in the East.

" The Polish people, united in a love of freedom and in the endeavour of independence, will unanimously and firmly oppose all attempts to impose upon them any rule coming from the East .

" Our present firmness has its source in the thousand year old tradition of a fight for the freedom and culture of Western Europe."

Therefore the proposal which the Polish Government made in February, to negotiate with the Soviets on the ground that some war-time demarcation line might be created between Polish and Soviet administration, east of Wilno and Lwów, and that the Polish frontier would be stabilised after the war, was not supported by the country. Premier Mikolajczyk admitted this fact in an interview published in the *Manchester Guardian* on June 2, where he expressed the hope that his country would agree with his solution. However, the country rejected the idea and reiterated its opinion that there could not be any bargaining over Polish territory or over its frontier with Russia. The Government had gone further than the Polish Political Representation inside the State had authorised. Under normal conditions, such a step would have meant the formation of a new government, but, in the existing complicated situation, where the Government was abroad and those who gave it the plenipotentiary powers were unable under the guard of the invader, to follow all the shades of diplomatic disturbances, any such change could not be settled in a short time But one fact stood out plainly, the Polish Government clearly emphasised that it was without authority to make any renouncements and that any frontier question could be settled only at the Peace Conference.

In the debate which followed Churchill's speech, the Government and House of Commons reiterated that the restoration of a real independence to Poland should be regarded as one of the aims of Britain's foreign policy. The Prime Minister had repeated Stalin's words regarding a ' strong, integral, independent Poland as one of the leading Powers in Europe.' Every Soviet Republic, according to Soviet belief, was ' integral,' but what meaning had this term on February 22, in the House of Commons,

when the British Government announced its accord to the partition of Poland?

Arthur Greenwood, Leader of the Opposition, said that " there must be forever a beacon of freedom, which we call Poland, in the East of Europe," and he thought that, if the Prime Minister and the Foreign Secretary succeeded in allaying " the lurking fears of the Poles with regard to their future," they would have " deserved well of the House and of the British people and also of the Polish people themselves."

The following extracts were some of the most interesting in this debate :

Commander Sir Archibald Southby (*Conservative*) · Nobody can shut his eyes to the very general perturbation which exists in this country at the present time on the subject of Soviet-Polish relations. The question goes much farther than just a matter between those Governments alone. It affects the Balkans and the Baltic States and our relationship with the United States of America. While it is true as the Prime Minister said, that we should be guarded in what we say, it would be dangerous were it to go out that people in this country were not greatly concerned as to the future of Poland We went to war in order that Polish territory might be preserved, so far as we could, from invasion . whatever view we may take about the discussions between Russia and Poland, I think we have to face the future in a spirit of realism Indeed, there is no other spirit which makes the slightest appeal to our great and valued Ally, Soviet Russia. The fact remains, however, that we gave Poland a definite and categorical pledge regarding her frontiers There is no ambiguity about that. There is the pledge . .

But what of Latvia, Lithuania, and Estonia? What is to be the future of Finland? These are grave and very weighty matters What is our action going to be if Poland stands by the letter of our bonds to her? What is the right hon Gentleman's action going to be, since he signed that bond? We went to war to prevent the dismemberment of Poland by force. Dismemberment by agreement might conceivably absolve us from our pledge.

I have said that we live in an age of realism. Russia naturally has very definite views as regards her frontiers, and, if the rectification of frontiers can guarantee peace in Europe, in God's name let us rectify them. But the rectification must take place by agreement and not by force. I do not think that we can do other than say that, as far as Poland is concerned, we must agree to the Curzon Line, provided that concessions are made in other directions which would recompense Poland for territories that she will have lost in the East. I am more than a little anxious about our foreign policy. Was the foreign policy enunciated by the Foreign Secretary at Moscow in all respects the same as the foreign policy agreed upon between the Prime Minister and Marshal Stalin at Teheran? If relations there were so cordial, then why did Soviet Russia administer such a slap in the face to us and to the United States when we sought to help in solving the Polish difficulty, because after all we are deeply concerned in the affairs of Poland.

Captain Alan Graham (*Conservative*) · Honourable soldiers and sailors respect legitimate authority, and it is not from ideology but from a sense of principle that they do so The legitimate national Governments of Poland, Greece and Yugoslavia have sacrificed everything but honour to their loyalty to us and to our ideals of freedom for European men and nations.

What rewards do we offer these peoples and Governments for their sacrifice of everything, for loyalty to us and to our ideals? To the Government and people of Poland we offer the loss of two of their most historic cities, Wilno and Lwów, and the sacrifice of one-third of their national territory, if we insist upon the so-called Curzon Line as their Eastern frontier . . .

In my experience, the Russians despise more than anything else weakness and vagueness, and the one thing they admire more than anything else is clarity and firmness. After all, the basis of true friendship, between men and between nations, is mutual respect, and if Russia sees us not being true to our other allies, how can she expect that we shall be true to her in the future? . . . It is not fair on the Russians to give them the impression that we have no clear policy in Europe How can they shape their policy to harmonise with ours, unless we make it very clear and very firm? They cannot believe, any more than this House can believe, that Britain, after standing up for freedom and civilisation against Germany, will now abdicate in favour of European anarchy, and turn the other cheek to civil war between her friends.

Of course, we must have friendship with Russia, but, as I said, for friendship there must be mutual respect. It would be false friendship, either for Russia or for Poland, to allow Russia to think that Europe, and the world ultimately, will tolerate a fourth partition of Poland. Most of Europe's subsequent troubles flowed from the three Partitions of Poland in the eighteenth century. The 'Curzon Line' closely corresponds to the Russian line of the Third Partition of 1795. If Britain and the United States are consenting parties to yet another Partition, they will be the first to suffer from it hereafter, in the same way that France, Sweden, Austria and Turkey ultimately suffered from the last three Partitions of Poland.

Russian desires in regard to Poland are threefold: they are natural desires and they are desires which, with good faith and not too much interference, but enough to see that fair play ensues, can be met. What are they? The first one is the co-operation of the Polish Underground Movement with the Russian forces as they enter and move through Poland. This has already been ensured by the commands given by the Polish Government and the Polish Commander-in-Chief, General Sosnkowski, to the Polish Underground Movement. These orders are certain of execution, because there is complete and absolute harmony between the Polish Underground Movement and the Polish Government in London. No other authority is, or can be, recognised by the genuine National Polish Government in London.

The second desire of Russia, which, I think, sometimes escapes the consciousness of many people in this country, largely from our concentration on the geography of other parts of the world, is to be relieved from a certain—and it sounds odd to say this in connection with Russia—fear. Russia is, of course, a state made up of many nationalities indeed, and she does fear the attraction of that part of the White Ruthenians and Ukrainians who are on the Polish side of the Polish-Russian border for those Ruthenians and Ukrainians who remain on the other side of the border as it was left by the Treaty of Riga. She fears that these parts of these two peoples would act as Piedmont did in the case of United Italy—as centripetal nuclei for an independent White Ruthenian or Ukrainian state, independent of Russia . . . They wish to be rid of all their racial problems. It was precisely so as not to have relations between themselves and Russia embittered that, at the Treaty of Riga, they deliberately refused territory as far as 100 miles to the east of the Riga Treaty line, which was then offered to them by Lenin, Chicherin and Trotsky. This was refused for the very good reason . . .

because the Polish Government in those days . . did not wish to have within its borders people who, through their racial sympathies, would prove to be poor Polish citizens. The Polish Government to-day would be very ready for an exchange of those Ruthenians or Ukrainians, who may wish to cross the border into Russia, by a transfer of population by which they would receive back inside Poland the Polish people who may be left alive of those who are still being detained in Soviet Russia.

The third desire of Russia in regard to Poland is natural again—the loyal co-operation of the Polish Government and people in peace as well as in war. The Poles have proved that co-operation in war at the price of a greater martyrdom than any other nation in Europe. They still go on. The Battle of Britain was mentioned just now. It is probable that, but for the Poles in the Battle of Britain, the result of the battle might have gone differently The proportion of German planes shot down by them was higher, in fact, than those shot down by our own pilots I ask the House whether it does not agree that loyal co-operation between the Polish Government and people on the one hand, and the Russian Government and people on the other hand is not more likely to be achieved by fair treatment of Poles to-day, by a recognition by Russia of the united national, democratic and independent Polish Government in London as the only possible Polish Government, and by a Government of Poland after the war elected without pressure from any outside nation but solely according to the entirely freely expressed wishes of the Polish people themselves. It would be criminal folly to suggest that, without forcing upon our Polish Ally the necessity to amputate more and more of his own body, any renewal of the relations or alliance between these two Slav nations is impossible. Let us, therefore, take whatever aid we can from any Allies against the Germans, but not such aid as can only be given by the sacrificing of our loyal Allies, because that is a sacrifice of our own honour, and then, when the day of reckoning comes to us, as sooner or later it surely must, we shall not then ourselves have or deserve a single friend in the world. . .

Mr. McGovern (*I.L.P.*): . . . If we cast our minds back to 1939, and remember the high-sounding and lofty phrases in which we announced in this House our reasons for going to war, we see they have all been shed to-day, and that the moral and idealistic aspect has been scrapped, as very often happens as the war goes on. The Prime Minister has talked in the most contemptuous and evasive manner about pledges given to the various nations in 1939. Indeed, it was advanced at that time, as one of the great reasons for our going to war . . .

The position has been reversed within the last six, nine or twelve months. Where formerly Hitler was advancing throughout various countries, incorporating all the States into the German Reich, and declaring them to be under the guardianship of the Nazi Party, now in a large measure, we see the armies of Hitler retreating and disgorging the booty that they had claimed when they were over-running Europe. As Hitler is receding, the partner with whom Hitler entered into his aggressive crimes in 1939, is taking the place of Adolf, and as Germany is disgorging territory, it is being swallowed up by Russia. The Prime Minister has, in my estimation, now become Stalin's " Charlie McCarthy."

When does aggression cease to be aggression? Is it aggression only when perpetrated by Hitler and the Nazi Party, or does it cease to be aggression when it is perpetrated by Stalin and the Bolshevik Party? That is a question to which this nation will have to provide an answer before very long . . . From the way that various countries are being considered to-day, one would think that they had provoked the war. Finland and

Poland are surely defenders against aggression, no matter what we think about their governments . . . The question is to bring one's mind back to the time when Stalin and Hitler had a pact, which was termed a pact of non-aggression, but which actually became a partnership in crime and resulted in the raiding and raping of the nations on the borderline. Where does this country stand in relation to Estonia, Latvia, Finland, Poland, Bulgaria, Yugoslavia and Rumania ?

. . The partnership was dissolved in 1941 because one of the partners got all he could out of the partnership and feared that the position was going to be reversed at a very early date. He proceeded to transfer his allegiance to see what he could get out of the other partnership which he made in 1941 Russia, from the point of view of the war, became an Ally of those who were heart and soul in this bloody struggle. To the people of London and various other cities, it ended the bombing nightmare, and, therefore, superficially, the people of this country welcomed Russia, not for what Russia stood, but because of the fact that she took the weight off this country in many respects Let us accept that. That meant to say that this country was prepared to enter into a partnership that was going to play the self-same game in a cunning form. I see in the papers to-day that they have set up a National Council, as a Government of Poland Anybody who knows of the happenings on the borders of Russia and in other countries or of the Communist Party in relation to other parties, knows the old game . I have heard people say that nothing could be fairer. Russia would offer independence. Yes, it would be an independent Poland, but it would be a linking up of Poland by means of a Government subservient to the Soviet State and would be extending the power of Soviet Russia. The same is happening, we are told, also in Finland. One of the proposed terms is a certain line of demarcation, with a Government friendly towards the Soviet Union. We know what that means. Another nominated State will be set up in Finland. Before you know where you are, the whole of the States, as the Armies roll forward, will be incorporated into the Soviet Union .

. . . We went to war ostensibly for the Polish Corridor. Now we see not only the corridor but the drawing room, the dining-room, the bedrooms, the whole of the castle is going, but going from another direction, and we have not got a Prime Minister who can get up at that Box and state honestly that his illness at Teheran was not only a physical illness but the political illness of a man who knows that he is being driven remorselessly along a road on which he cannot stop . .

Mr. Pickthorn *Cambridge University* (*Conservative*): . . . This is a war, and wars are activities between States, and M. Stalin has told us that war remains war and aggression remains aggression. What was the cause, of this war ? The cause of this war was the infringement of Polish frontiers. It is a very common argument that it was a mere occasion, not the real cause, but that seems to me to be perfect nonsense. It is quite true, I have no doubt at all, there was going to be near the middle of the 20th century, or before it, another great European war, but not necessarily this war, beginning in 1939 ; this war is really the war which arose in a definite way and time and it is the essence of this war that that was the way in which it arose. The " New Zealand Herald " put it on the 11th January · " The war began through a certain British pledge to Poland. Habitually, such pledges have been kept." I ask the House to consider the word " habitually " ; it seems to me to be extremely well chosen.

. . . The Prime Minister said that he hoped he would be pressed no further. One cannot press much further because one might do harm, but my right hon. Friend said one or two things which I think were illogical.

He said he was still in favour of what has hitherto always been our principle and the principle of international law since I don't know when, perhaps the 15th century—that annexation, territorial changes, should all wait for the end of hostilities But he then went on to say that anything in Poland east of the 'Curzon Line' ought to go and that it was a pity that Wilno had ever been Polish territory and so on. I think we should be awful idiots in the House if we got on to where the 'Line' should be drawn.

Mr. Gallacher (*Communist*) The other night when we had a so-called Brains Trust at the Central Hall, someone asked "Has Poland to be thrown to the wolves?" I answered that I was prepared to trust the Soviet people and the Soviet Government to assist the Polish people to get rid of the wolves which had ravaged the land for centuries There was not in Europe a more poverty-stricken and illiterate peasantry than the Polish peasantry.

Mr. Wragg: Were they any worse than the Russian peasantry?

Mr. Gallacher: Even worse than the Russian peasants were under the Tsars. There was not in Europe such a miserable, poverty-stricken, illiterate people as Polish people.

Captain Graham: It is all the more strange, therefore, that that nation should have remained so completely united throughout history and that it is proving so difficult to find even enough Communists in that country to form a bogus Polish Government In fact, they have to be brought from the United States and one or two from here.

Mr. Gallacher. You have to understand that long before there was Fascism in Germany, there was Fascism in Poland and the Communists were exterminated.

Captain Graham: Will the hon. gentleman explain what he means by "Fascism"? I have heard of it in Italy but not in any other country.

Mr. Gallacher: Under Pilsudski there was no question about the Fascist character of Poland, and there is no question of what happened to the Communists there. They were massacred.*

Captain Graham: They were never massacred

Sir Edward Grigg (*Conservative*) Does the House remember—this is a very recent issue—that we guaranteed Czecho-Slovakia after the Munich surrender? What use was that to Czecho-Slovakia? We proceeded to guarantee Poland and Rumania. What was the use of that to Poland and Rumania? High principles, certainly; but a "stumer" cheque all the same.

I agree that Poland in this matter is the test case. Like, I am sure, all other Members, I feel that we cannot pay too high a tribute to Polish endurance and heroism in this struggle. The Poles have done magnificently in the underground resistance movement in Poland—I do not believe there has been a single Polish Quisling—and they have done magnificently fighting by our side elsewhere. There is nothing that could be said that would be too high praise for the gallant Polish people. But the Polish people, like another great people nearer home, have one great fault, an inveterate historical memory. Their history is a terrible history, all the same, I think it would be wise for them to remember at the present time that history is many-sided, that every nation has its own version, and is quite convinced that that version is the only right one

* Mr. Gallacher had simply reversed the facts. Even Moscow propaganda had never stated that there had been an 'extermination' of some of the Communists in Poland This extermination mentioned had been carried out by the Comintern who dissolved the Polish Communist Party and executed those Polish Communists who were still in Russia. A further 'purge' amongst the ex-Polish Communists was begun in Eastern Poland after the Soviet invasion of that country in 1939.

On frontiers, I would most warmly endorse what was said by the Prime Minister, who spoke words of wisdom. What matters is not frontiers; what matters to us is a question of principle. It is the independence of Poland. That is what we guaranteed By independence, I mean a country being strong, conducting its own affairs, choosing its own form of Government, able to look to the future with security, and based on really strong foundations, which Poland has never yet been in all its history. There is no question whatever that it is our duty to make perfectly plain to the Russian Government where we stand on this principle—the independence of Poland and the independence of all small countries who have been, and wish to be again, nationally independent. I cannot believe that in this matter we are really fundamentally divided from Marshal Stalin . . .

The Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Mr. Eden): . . . Let me say one word about Poland, and it will only be one word, because the House will understand that the Prime Minister's words which he used yesterday were very carefully chosen, that we are still in negotiation, the outcome of which all of us have very much at heart, and I may only too easily say something which might make our task harder than it is. The right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister said: "Marshal Stalin and I also spoke and agreed on the need for Poland to obtain compensation at the expense of Germany both in the North and in the West." The hon. Member for North Lambeth said that he did not take exception to that because of the action which he conjured up of a possible large transference of German territory to Poland and so on. I am not going into that at this time, and quite obviously, whatever is done or is agreed, if agreement is reached and when it is reached, it will come before the House, but I do want to put this consideration before the House. The hon. Gentleman was speaking as though the position in that part of Europe could bear some parallel to the position at the outbreak of the war. It bears hardly any. An enormous and horrible transformation has taken place, for instance, over the whole of what was formerly Western Poland. Germany has removed populations wholesale from vast tracts of territory, millions of people, and in many cases they are now dead. The position is, as the Prime Minister said yesterday, and I ought to add, said with the knowledge and approval of his colleagues, that he and Stalin spoke and agreed upon the need for Poland to obtain compensation at the expense of Germany in the North and West. That represents the position of His Majesty's Government . . .

The most characteristic feature in the Debate of the 22-23 February in the House of Commons was that the majority of the speakers were applying their western outlook to Russia and, therefore, the picture was reflected in a concave mirror. "Russia is brilliantly well-informed," wrote Kenneth de Courcy in the *Review of World Affairs*, "about everything in Britain. Her sources of information are unsurpassed, and have lately improved still further. Britain knows almost nothing of what is happening in Russia."* A fact indeed revealed so 'brilliantly' by this Debate.

* *Review of World Affairs*, March 28th, 1944, p. 7.

Kenneth de Courcy was referring to the ruling classes of both countries, for the general public of Britain knew very little, and Russia nothing at all, of each other. Some of those 'unsurpassed sources' had already been locked in British prisons.

Certain M.P.s were expressing anxiety not so much over Poland's frontier, but rather whether Poland was to exist at all. The House was tacitly in agreement with the Government's decision to resign from the Baltic countries and to recognise Russia's special rights there, an action which in no way solved the problem of the zone more important to Britain—the Mediterranean. Parliament would not admit that a struggle was going on between Russia and England; between Western civilisation and the attacking Asiatic; between imperialism and democracy; and it supported the Government in its recognition of the 'Ribbentrop-Molotov Line' disguised under the name of the 'Curzon Line.'

Many lofty speeches were offered to the Polish people on this occasion, including advice by Sir Edward Grigg who developed the Prime Minister's thesis, and stated bluntly that Britain, in effect, had given 'stumer' cheques to the countries of Europe.

Sir Edward Grigg represented that section of public opinion which, hypnotised by the spectacle of power, followed the cult of Colossus and considered it useless to talk of a matter which Stalin had already settled. He could not believe, apparently, "that in this matter of the independence of Poland" the British Government was "really fundamentally divided from Marshal Stalin."*

The British pledge to Poland "to resist any attempt, whether direct or indirect, open or secret, to interfere in Polish affairs," was plain; there could be no quibbling concerning these commitments. Britain had only two alternatives, either to keep her word or to break it. The British Government sought a third solution, which began and finished with the proclamation concerning the reality of this "view of 1919." A most interesting discussion on whether Britain had 'betrayed Poland' was initiated in *Free Europe* on March 10 by G. Glasgow, the well-known political writer, who stated:

"Britain, who declared war on Germany to defend Poland, is now prepared to buy victory over Germany by betraying Poland . . . Under the stress and strain of the war, the British Government, let it be freely confessed, had shifted its ground. Its purpose is the defeat of Germany. Every other consideration whatsoever is sacrificed to that purpose . . . Britain puts all her money, as it were, on Stalin. The Baltic States, Poland, Yugoslavia, Greece—they are the price that has to be paid."

* He praised Russia's dictator in a manner unusual for a British Conservative:—"We owe very much to Marshal Stalin" Grigg said, "I, personally, am convinced that victory in this war would have been impossible for our cause but for the part which Russia has played. I am also convinced that Russia could not have played her part but for the supremacy established from 1929 onwards by Marshal Stalin. Had he not, through the method of terror, liquidated many of his enemies, Russia would have been reduced to impotence at this period. It was Marshal Stalin's five-year plan, the development of natural resources, the development of factories, the development of mechanisation, in which millions of Russians have been trained, which have enabled Russia to roll back the German Armies and to achieve what she has done. I believe that he will crown that great achievement by showing that he is absolutely at one with us on this principle of freedom and independence for the smaller States of Europe."

Ivor Thomas, M.P., replied that: "he would make a grave mistake who imagines that the British people have abandoned the ideals for which they took up arms in 1939, and after five years of sacrifice are prepared to endorse the 'Munich' in which far off countries about which we know nothing would be sacrificed on the altar of power-politics"

Major Guy Lloyd, M.P., was indignant: "There is no question whatever of our sacrificing Poland On the contrary, we desire to see Poland rewarded for her heroic resistance and terrible travail, and stronger than before the war. We desire to see her compensated at the expense of her cruel aggressor, both in the North and in the West, in return for concessions freely (!) made by her in the East.

"*Force majeure* is not part of our policy We should have much preferred to leave all boundary questions until after the war, but the rapidly developing situation on her eastern borders obviously makes it desirable to bring about, if possible, some agreement between Poland and Russia on the boundary question. Friendly advice has been offered to the Polish Government by our Prime Minister and Foreign Secretary. The character of this advice, its wisdom, and its equity, may be questioned, but surely to offer, and to seek, to mediate between two of our friends who are both fighting the common foe, cannot, by the wildest stretch of imagination, be called "betrayal."

"The Poles have a perfect right to reject the advice offered, if they prefer to discuss boundaries at a later date There is a risk in such a decision, of which the Poles are doubtless fully aware, but may well be courageous to take, come what may

"Mr C. Glasgow's statement," commented another writer in *Free Europe*, of "our being prepared to buy victory over Germany by betraying Poland" is as untrue as it is foolish. This lessens the value of the article but does not destroy his argument.

"Britain has certainly not betrayed Poland yet, and we still believe, is not likely to do so. But it would be idle to deny that great fears have arisen in England that Russia intends to interfere very largely with Poland's political and territorial future; quite possibly without argument or consultation with her Allies and even against their express wishes. It is not however, until that happens that it may be said that betrayal has taken place."

IV.—THE MAELSTROM
ON THE EVE OF THE INVASION

Great Britain has vital interests which must be defended resolutely.
What are these interests? National honour is one of them She would not be winning the war if her Continental Allies did not believe her word It is not just a matter of sentiment—honour to her is a matter of life and death, as it is to no other Power. She is pledged to restore the independence of Poland—of all Poland, and not half of it She is pledged to restore the independence of Yugo-Slavia. She is in honour bound to liberate all the nations, big and small, who have fought on her side.

(*Daily Mail*, August 31, 1943).

During the first six months of 1944, there was no essential change in Polish-Russian relations. In its propaganda, the Kremlin continued to treat the Polish Government as a gang of ' German collaborators and spies,' while at the same time seeking to find and develop any pro-Soviet elements among the Poles in order to split the unity of the country. In the diplomatic field, Moscow endeavoured, through London and Washington, to exert pressure on the Polish Government in order to ' soften it ' to the degree whereby it could be used as an instrument for their policy of a future domination of Europe. The inflexible attitude of the Polish people, however, eliminated any possibility of the slightest territorial concession by the Polish Government to the Russian demands. Therefore, the British Government tried hard, but in vain, to reach a solution which would at the same time satisfy their own people, and maintain the ' Unity of Nations.'

Poland, alone, stood unconquerable amidst a German Europe, where Petain, Hacha, Tito, Antonescu, Horthy, Pavelic and other smaller Quislings had sought Hitler's friendship and protection in order to secure the fate of their peoples and to pass through the terrible storm raging over the world and in their countries, with the least possible damage and loss. Each one of those leaders had admitted to the principle that for the weak, submission and betrayal had become the only weapon.

Within the stronghold of England, the exiled Governments of the Allies, the sovereigns and leaders of the countries invaded by Germany, the provisional governments and national committees of de Gaulle and Benes, free Austrians and even free Germans, worked in London for the liberation of their countries, declaring themselves the only ' genuine ' representatives of their people. Day and night on the waves of ether, voices of both these camps rolled out, some over German-controlled stations and some used British and American wave-lengths. Both parties

fighting for their cause heaped blame on the others' heads, in an endeavour to induce their citizens and soldiers to follow their lead.

Poland alone stood as a solid block undivided. The Germans had tried to split the country for four years, but no Pole had spoken over a German-controlled radio, linking that country's cause with his. The German radio expressed only one sentiment in relation to Poland—hatred.

Had Poland lain to the west of Europe under the shadow of Britain, her triumph would have already been secured, for Germany was reeling under the blows of war. But Poland was in the path of another imperialist Power, and the expected triumph over Germany was not to mean a final triumph for her as well While still under the heel of one conqueror, she found she would have to defend herself against yet another. The impartial observer was obliged to admit one fact, at least, that the Polish people in the face of total war were first and foremost an example of total unity. Every effort the Soviets made in Poland in their search for agents was frustrated The Polish Underground, with its representative Government in London, ruled over Poland.

The Soviets were unable, either to over-run this Underground State, or disable its Government. Moscow had finally to confess that she was still far from her desired goal. Under such circumstances, the Kremlin, accustomed to conducting its campaigns according to well-known Communist methods, had to alter its tactics in this Polish case. It reached the conclusion that the creation of a competitive government for Poland, based on the ' Union of Polish Patriots ' with its headquarters in Moscow, would not be easily digested by America and Britain, particularly as this ' Union ' did not possess even one well-known personality within its ranks. Therefore Moscow took care to limit the role of this ' Union ' in its propaganda, merely asking on its behalf for a share in the Polish Government and the right of co-representation, as if this ' shy body ' did, in truth, represent some section of the Polish people.*

Although publicly abandoning the idea of using the ' Patriots ' as the basis for a rival Government, Moscow, in fact, decided to go farther and

* *The Times'* Moscow's correspondent, repeating the Soviet's views, wrote on April 16th, 1944 ·

" The Union of Polish Patriots has no aspirations towards becoming the Government of Poland, but will stand firm to the principle that the people of liberated Poland must choose a Government in free elections "

This statement, " stand firm to the principle . . of free elections " which the ' Union ' made, appeared open to query for as already stated, this term ' free election ' was interpreted differently by the Russians

The Polish Government had already announced that the normal elections would be undertaken immediately after the liberation of their country. There was more than one governmental declaration on this point; as, for instance, the declaration of February 24th, 1942, and the statement made by the Prime Minister on July 27th, 1943; the Declarations of the four main parties combined in the Home Political Representation of August 30th, 1943, and the speech of the President of the Polish Republic of November 11th, 1943 It is also worth recalling that within two months of the liberation of Poland in 1918, elections were held and a parliament created.

deeper, to create an illusion of Polish authority, supposedly residing inside Poland itself and definitely pro-Russian in character. The ' Powers-that-be ' in Moscow considered it would be much easier for the United Nations to recognise such a body as the representative of a supposedly existing underground organisation hostile to the Polish Government in London. When the Red Army occupied Poland, it could then become a government *de facto* supported by the bayonets of that army. The difficulty was first, to create such a body, and secondly, to introduce it into the international arena At the end of December, the P.P.R. (Communist Party) in Poland, spread the news that they had formed a ' Council ' Since the Communist influence in that country was nil, the manifesto issued on this occasion received no great publicity and was merely regarded by the leaders of the Underground as one more scrap of paper.

In this ' manifesto ' (which was to become known later through the medium of Moscow radio), the ' Council ' repeated the programme of the P.P.R., stating that its foreign policy would be grounded on a ' close alliance with the Soviet Union,' and accepted the claims which Moscow was making to the Eastern half of Poland. Since the news of the formation of this ' Council ' did not create any stir abroad, Moscow willy-nilly had to come into the open and, in February, 1944, Moscow radio began its campaign in favour of this body, the Polish-Soviet, under the name of the ' Peoples' National Council,' "which," as one inspired correspondent suggested, " could easily and quickly become a Polish Government acceptable to Moscow " Moscow radio claimed that the ' Council ' included among its members " the Polish Peasants, Socialists and Workers' Parties and other national groupings."

Thus this robot creation of Russia began to announce its existence to the world and to expand exclusively through the medium of the Moscow radio stations, and all information regarding its supposed activities became known solely from that source. Inside Poland itself, every existing political party, from the left to the right, declared unanimously that they had nothing in common with such a ' Council,' and issued a proclamation to the Polish people to the effect that,

" circles hostile to the Polish Republic have started an action with the aim of weakening the cohesion of the Polish nation by spreading chaos and causing division . . . The foreign Communist agents, acting under cover of the P P R. in Poland, and dependent on a non-Polish foreign centre, are conducting an action which is threatening the most vital interests of Poland. . . . They (the P P.R) are declaring their willingness to renounce the Eastern provinces of the Polish Republic and are fighting the Polish Government which possesses the confidence of our people, the Polish Army abroad, and the Home Army within our country.

" In an endeavour to weaken and split our national forces in this decisive moment of the war, the Communist agents are forming a Peoples' National Council and Headquarters of the Peoples' Army and announcing the creation of a ' Provisional Government ' . . Since all these institutions are entirely fictitious and their creators are catering solely for foreign con-

sumption, it is nevertheless necessary to stamp out this action of the P.P.R., as an act of high treason to the Polish people and the Polish State"

In spite of the fact that the signatures of all parties were to be found on this document, Moscow propaganda continued to emphasise that some of them were represented on this 'Council,' which, by this time, had proceeded even to nominate a C.-in-C., one by the name of 'Rola,' and to demand that all Polish forces at home and abroad should be subordinated to him. This 'National Council' of the Soviets became a red flag in Moscow's hands, which was waved threateningly before the Polish Government at every opportunity.*

Apart from the Soviet radio, it seems this 'body' was only mentioned seriously in London's Sunday Press and in that section of the English and American press which was helping in the process of 'softening' Polish resistance (and not only Polish) towards the demands of Russian imperialism.

That the Kremlin was attempting to split the Polish bloc was proved by the extraordinary instance of the American citizens, one of Polish descent—Father Orlemanski and Professor Lange. They had both publicly declared their pro-Soviet sympathies in America and had, therefore, been elevated in Moscow's propaganda to the realms of the symbolic. The Kremlin proclaimed them as leaders of a great section of the Poles in America and stated that they should, like certain members of the Soviet 'Union of Patriots' in Moscow, be incorporated into their (the Russians) 'friendly' Polish Government. In order to strengthen the position of these two American citizens, Stalin sent a personal letter to President Roosevelt, asking for them to be granted passports to Russia. Thus, in this strange and unexpected way, the priest of a small parish in Springfield and an obscure professor of some American university found themselves for a brief spell the centre of an excited world-curiosity. They were flown to Moscow, where Stalin received them and conversed several hours with each one individually, assuring

* The signatories of the parties and the organisations to be found under the 'Manifesto' issued by the Polish Soviet (i e, the 'Council') in Poland and announced in that country, were by no means similar to those which appeared in Moscow. According to Moscow, the 'Manifesto' was signed by (1) the Peasant Party, (2) the Polish Socialist Party (therefore, by the same parties which already had their representatives in the Polish Government residing in London) and by the P.P R. (the Communist Party) and several other organisations, difficult to identify; while inside Poland, the 'Manifesto' contained only the signature of the P.P R., and organisations such as "the representatives of doctors and teachers, the group of partyless Democrats, the Union of Fighting Youth, the leaders of the National Democrats" and other similar fictitious and non-existent groups, nine in all. In fact, the 'Manifesto' was issued solely by the P.P.R. (Communist Party), which, as it has been said, had never collaborated with the other Polish parties, and whose signature could be found in Moscow's Act of Dissolution of the Comintern of June 10th, 1943. In Western Poland, the P P.R. had been collaborating with the German Communists. In the area of the Russian occupation of 1939, this Party was banned by order of Moscow, since the Ukrainian and White Ruthenian Communist parties were already working there.

each that, ' in the interests of the Soviets, Poland was to be strong and independent,' and so forth It is only fair to emphasise that both these men had stated quite definitely that they had gone to Russia of their own accord and were not representing anyone, or any political party.*

The Kremlin announced in May that representatives of the mysterious ' Peoples' National Council ' were visiting Moscow. They had arrived with the object of " acquainting themselves with the activities of the ' Union of the Polish Patriots ' in the U.S.S.R., and the First Polish Army," and to " establish connection with the Allied Governments, including (!) the Soviet Government."† Thus the ' Polish Soviet ' made its appearance in Moscow. On this occasion, the Russians were to disclose one Polish name over the radio, but it was the equivalent of the English Brown or Smith and an unknown personality. At the same time, Moscow radio hinted that representatives of the ' Polish Soviets ' were willing to visit the other Allied Governments.

The chief aim of the Soviets' 1943-1944 propaganda campaign against Poland was to convince the United Nations that the Poles were divided and that a large section of the Polish people were pro-Soviet and would willingly follow the path of a close alliance with Russia.

In February, Moscow announced a change in one of the paragraphs of their Constitution, by which the sixteen Soviet Republics were now to become ' independent.' Russia's ' voluntary incorporation ' of her neighbours would thus obviously be facilitated, or, at least, so it was to appear in world opinion. The immediate result of this was that the Soviet-appointed Presidents of the Baltic Republics residing in Moscow announced (the Allied Press passed over this fact in silence) that they, in the name of their States, were " united with the Soviets for ever."

The ' Polish Peoples' National Council ' the forerunner of the Soviet Polish Government, could sooner or later be expected to follow this path of ' voluntary incorporation ' into the Soviet Union.

In accordance with the Communist's method of attacking the enemy in his own camp, Moscow propaganda made a determined onslaught against the Polish forces in Britain and the Middle East during the winter of 1943 and the spring of 1944. Until then, the main topic had been that the Poles had left Russia and did not wish to fight against the Germans. " The Polish Army has gone into disgraceful exile in Irak," wrote Soviet *Free Poland* in Moscow, " we have nothing in common with the treacherous policy of Sikorski. There is no Polish Army on the Eastern front,

* Father Orlemanski had left his parish without the knowledge or consent of his superiors, and after this visit was suspended forthwith. Immediately on his return, he confessed his disobedience to the Church, and retired for ever from political activities. Professor Lange seems to have been very cautious in expressing his views on his unexpected trip to Russia, but he announced that ' part ' of the Poles in the Soviet Union were in support of the Polish Government in London.

† Soviet Press, May 24th, 1944.

there is no Polish Army in the U.S.S.R.' There is no new contribution of Poland to this war."*

When the Anders' Army, equipped by Britain, stood in Irak ready for the 1944 offensive, Moscow had to find another theme, namely, that in that Army there was unrest directed against the Polish Government, and that the men were endeavouring to join the 'Polish Forces' created in the U S.S.R., and, further, that these supposedly Moscow sympathisers were being persecuted. For instance, on March 21, the Soviet newspapers had quoted a dispatch from the Soviet News Agency in Cairo, under the heading "The Mediaeval Tortures in Anders' Army":—

"New and irrefutable proof is being received of the persecution of all in General Anders' Army who express a desire to enter immediately into the struggle against the Germans or desire solidarity with the Polish patriots who are already fighting on the Soviet-German front." This propaganda seemed particularly harmful and, in the end, a British official denial was published in Cairo, on March 23, stating that:—

"In connection with recent reports that all members of the Polish forces in the Middle East under the command of General Anders, who wish to take an active part in fighting against the Germans, are being relentlessly persecuted, and thousands of them have disappeared and that more than 700 have been condemned to long terms of imprisonment; and, further, that hundreds of Polish workers have been handed over in Palestine to prison on the orders of General Anders, it is learned in authoritative British quarters in Cairo that there is no confirmation of these reports With the exception of a few deserters and criminals, whose numbers do not exceed what is normally to be expected, all members wish to continue the struggle Two divisions from these who were recently in the Middle East are now in Italy."†

A different twist of Soviet propaganda was employed to disrupt the Polish forces in Britain and to throw discredit on the Polish Government, namely, the accusation of anti-Semitism. A group of Jews, Polish

* This had been widely discussed before by *The Times*' Moscow correspondent In answer, Sir William G. Max-Muller, former British Ambassador to Poland, stated in a letter to the Editor of *The Times* (April 25th). "As a matter of fact, the transfer of the Polish Army to British territory in the Middle East during the summer of 1942 took place on the initiative of the Soviet Government and on the ground, as they put it, that such an army might be needed for the defence of the Middle East. It therefore conveyed quite a wrong impression to suggest that it had any connection with the severance of diplomatic relations in 1943 or was of such a character as to provoke resentment in Russia."

† The forces on the Italian front were simultaneously subjected to the fire of German propaganda. Leaflets were dropped and the radio station *Wanda*, which the Nazis had installed in Rome, issued the same instructions and promises as had emanated from the Soviet radio station *Kosciuszko*.

The Polish soldiers christened this German radio station, 'Wanda the Second.' The star of the first Wanda (Wanda Wasilewska) had substantially waned in Moscow. She had not published one word during the first six months of 1944, and her name had only received occasional mention in the Soviet Press as being still amongst the living and a "writer rather than a political figure." (*The Times*, April 11th).

citizens, but former inhabitants of France and Belgium, in an effort to gain British citizenship, had asked to be transferred into the British Army, and, when their request was refused, had deserted.*

Without enlargement, it is worth pointing out that this anti-Semitic charge was levelled against a Government which included, not only a Jewish Cabinet Minister (not for the first time in history), but also four other Jews among the twelve higher officials who were employed in the Ministry predestined to express and form the opinion of the people, namely, the Ministry of Information. In addition to this, the editors of both its newspapers were Jews.† The Commanders of the Army Corps and Divisions in Poland were Jews. The role which the Poles played in securing their Jewish population against German prosecution was well-known, and if any Jews remained alive in Poland, it was because they were hidden from their oppressors by the Polish population.

Nevertheless, an extensive Press campaign, charging the Polish Government and the Army with anti-Semitism, was begun in Britain. Several of those twenty-three M P s who had opposed the Anti-Strike Bill when Britain's war effort had been endangered by strikes, which, according to Bevin, the Minister of Labour, " could stop the work of three million people," made numerous interjections in the House of Commons on the subject of this supposed anti-Jewish crime of the Poles.

The organiser of this anti-Polish campaign was never mentioned in the British Press, but Moscow radio had taken such an active participation in the entire affair, that there seemed no need for further indication on this matter.

There was great fear among the Poles that, as the Red Army marched into Poland, the Underground organisations who revealed themselves might well be exposed to Soviet repression, and the lack of agreement existing between Moscow and the Polish Government would appear in all its stark gravity. There could only be supposition as to how the Russians would react, and with Soviet domination in Poland still fresh in the memory, these suppositions could not be too bright. The Polish Government, urged by London to give the order for their countrymen to

* McGovern, House of Commons, May 25th, said :
" Polish Jewish soldiers came to London to have a showdown, and to demand that they should be transferred to the British Forces Many people in this House and the country are aware that the Communist Party in this country had a hand in that I am told on very good authority that they paid the fares of the men to come to London, because it was part of their instruction to work for the denunciation of the Polish Government in London."

† There appears to be no greater expert and authority on Jewish affairs in England than Dr. Hertz, the chief Rabbi of the British Empire who, in his speech of June 18th, 1943, thus pictured the situation of the Jews in Poland .—
" That, as long as Poland was powerful, Polish Jewry enjoyed an inner autonomy and freedom equalled by no other contemporary Jewry. Furthermore, it cannot be too often repeated that to Poland belongs the priority among European peoples in religious and cultural toleration."

co-operate with the Red Army without waiting to receive a guarantee from Russia, hesitated. The decision was taken by the country itself, by the Underground in Eastern Poland. The people of that country trusting in the British commitments, decided to meet the entering Russian forces, for the first time in centuries, not with arms in hand, but with offers of collaboration in the fight against the common foe Germany, thus giving a concrete example of Polish goodwill. The main, ever-present thought was naturally to re-assert Poland's sovereign rights over her national territory.

On January 12, 1944, the Commander of the Home Army issued an Order of the Day, declaring that :—

"At the moment, when war is passing over Polish territory, the Poles . . will support the Red Army fighting the retreating Germans, on the scale of all existing possibilities and to the limits of State interests, according to the decision of the Government and the orders of the C.-in-C. At the same time," the order continued, " we do not in any case submit to any political pressure whose object is to subordinate us to foreign aims, and tend to take from us the freedom to organise our national State and life according to our own political and social ideals."

On March 19, the Commander of the Polish Home Forces in the Równe district, approached the Russian troops then in that region. Formations of the Home Army had also revealed themselves to the Soviet forces throughout the Volyn province in Ostróg, Zdolbunóv, Witoldów, Kostopol, Mlynóv, Pańska Dolina, Luzova, Rozyszcze, Antonovka, Jurczyn, Zaturce, Przeobraze, and so on Troops of the Polish Home Army established contact with the Soviet parachute troops behind the front line.

Representatives of the Underground Civil Administration approached the Commanders of the entering Soviet forces and handed them the following declaration :

"Acting under orders from the Polish Government's Delegate, we meet the forces of the Soviet Union on Polish soil as our co-belligerents in the fight against our common enemy—Germany. Poland was the first country to wage war against her in defence of her own and other nations' independence, and she has been fighting against her with her allies for over four years. At the same time, we bring to your knowledge that there is in existence in these territories an administration, secretly organised by the Polish State under the yoke of the German occupation. We expect that, in accordance with international law, the Soviet Army will enable Polish authorities, during military operations on Polish soil, to assure the social and economic welfare of her population."

The first information regarding this gesture by the Poles was given over Moscow radio, but it was shortly followed by the news that Polish troops had not been welcomed by the advancing Russians When the first thirty-five units of the Polish Home Army contacted the Red Army troops, the Soviets executed twenty-three of the Commanders of these units (three were shot and twenty were hung), who declared and maintained their loyalty to the Polish Government and stated they would carry

out its orders in full.* The Home Army privates were forcibly incorporated into the Red Army. The Polish Government communicated these facts to the British and American Governments, requesting their assistance. Any further move on the part of the Polish Underground Army towards revealing itself was held up for the time being.

It seemed, the Russians had a definite idea on how to deal with the Polish Home Army After a few days, however (perhaps under Allied pressure), they arrived at the conclusion that it was senseless to react in a hostile manner as, in such event, they could not expect to receive any further collaboration in their advance. Thus, in the part of the Volyn province then occupied, a local military agreement was reached—the Russian Commander presented the terms that Polish forces in that area should be transformed into an Infantry Division, which they (the Soviets) would equip. This division was to act under operational command of the Russians, but would be subordinated to the Polish C.-in-C , and the Polish Government in London. Thus the 27th Division—which had been garrisoned there in pre-war days—began to be reconstructed.

On March 27, 1944, the C -in-C. of the Polish Home Army, General Bor, sent the following order to his Deputy Commander of the Volyn province of the Home Army :

" 1 With Soviet help you should reorganise yourselves into the 27th Infantry Division. This Division will be subordinated to the Commander of the Home Army and through him to the Polish authorities in London

" 2 The task of the 27th Volynian Division is to fight the Germans in Poland. In carrying out this task, it will be subject to the Soviet High Command until this matter will be settled by an agreement between the Central authorities of the Soviet Union and the Poles

" 3 To reinforce the Division, Volynian man-power is to be used in agreement with the Soviet authorities.

" 4. This Division is to be clearly a unit of the Polish Forces. New recruits must take the oath prescribed for the men of the Polish Home Army.

" 5. The Soviet authorities must be informed about the situation in Poland. You are ordered to disclose that the 27th Division is the first part of the Polish Home Army with which the Soviet Forces have come into contact in Poland, but while advancing further into Poland they will come across more such units struggling against the Germans. These units will also disclose their identity and offer their co-operation "

In spite of their terrible experiences, the Poles gave yet another share to the Allied cause—they were placing their armed forces within the country itself at the disposal of the Soviets But the presentiment began to arise that, gradually, with the Soviet advance into Poland, they would take over this Home Army and that finally the Polish Government would be left with empty hands The conscription of the Poles by the Russians in the occupied Volyn districts was carried out energetically and they were able to claim that Berling's Army Corps had grown to 100,000

Such were the general aspects of this affair, since the conduct and prac-

* *New York Times*, May 17th. It was stated a day earlier at the Press Conference in London by the Polish Prime Minister

tical military understanding achieved on the spot was not supported by any normal political agreement. The Soviets, who had been unable to subordinate the Polish forces from the top through diplomatic channels, were now in the position of acquiring what they had desired, from the bottom, and, after carrying out their usual ' purge,' could then use these men, not only in the battle but as a formidable instrument to wield against the Polish Government.

The Army Corps created in the U.S.S.R., with the Soviet's General Berling as its Commander, was put forth by Moscow as a further and important proof of her willingness to set Poland up as a ' free country ' once more. This unit was developed into an Army under Soviet command as soon as it reached Polish soil and, cut off from its own Polish Government, it was used as a political factor against that Government. If Moscow spoke plainly, she could have said: ' You in London and Washington have your own Polish Army and we have ours. Let us see which will be the stronger in the decisive moment ! '*

All that the world could learn regarding this ' Soviet-Polish force ' was gleaned from the Russian statements. At any rate, it was a force ruled by laws exercised by the N.K.V.D.—unusual to the Poles as to every Westerner. On May 9 (Russian censorship saw nothing strange in releasing this news to the World Press), the *British Union Press* correspondent cabled that, in this Army, young Polish girls had been ordered to execute the men. He cited an instance where an execution squad was composed of girls, one of whom was 17, another 20. Armed with tommy-guns, they had shot a Pole who had ' refused to go to the front.'

According to statements issued by the Russians, the ' Polish Army in the U.S.S.R.' had been formed from the " civilian refugees who had fled before the Germans, and whom it had not previously been found expedient to transfer, or whose application to join General Anders' Army had been rejected on political grounds."†

Civilian refugees meant deportees who had been forbidden by the Russian authorities on ' political grounds,' or merely for no reason at all, to join General Anders' Army. General Anders himself did not refuse

* The oath taken by the soldiers in the Soviet Polish Army in the U.S.S.R. was worth noting

The Soviet paper *Nowe Widnokregi*, November 22nd, 1943, quoted it as follows.

" I solemnly swear to the Polish soil, dark with blood, to the Polish nation, tortured under German oppression, that I shall be worthy of the Polish name, and that I shall faithfully serve my Fatherland."

This oath was entirely different to that taken in any other army There was (1) no mention of God's name, (2) no mention of the Polish State, (3) nor of the independence and integrity of Poland, (4) no word regarding the President of the Republic, the legal Polish authorities, the Polish laws or the Polish Army.

The oath instituted by the Soviets could be interpreted in many ways, but as the question of Polish independence had been omitted, the phrases ' Polish soil ' and ' Fatherland ' could only be abstract ones

† *The Times*, April 11th and 16th, 1944.

the request of any Pole to join his troops. The best proof of this being that even Berling, the notorious Russian agent, had been admitted. " The second batch of soldiers which composed Berling's Army," stated the Russian Press, " came from a community of Polish Jews in the Western Ukraine, and deserters from the German Army, prisoners-of-war and inhabitants of the liberated districts in Poland." Apart from a small number of officers appointed from the ranks, this Army was ruled by Russian officers.* The statement that " in many cases, the Poles, though long resident in the Soviet Union and born there of Polish parents, were permitted to join the Polish Army," was used to explain away the number of Soviet officers to be found in this Army. From the lists published in the Soviet Press, it was observed that some of these men indeed had Polish names—but, in every case, they were foreign to the official lists of the officers of the Polish Forces.

The ' Polish Army in the U.S.S.R.' of 1944 was nothing less than the heir of the ' West Red Division ' of 1920, which had also been composed of the Poles, " and whose bones lay in the Siberian desert." Not one member had ever returned to Poland to give an account of what had been the fate of this Division at the termination of the Polish-Soviet War.

Thus, this ' Polish Army of 1944 in the U S.S.R.' had all the attributes of the ' national ' troops formed by the Soviets in 1919-1920, of which no trace had remained. Its badge was " the eagle," "but without its crown," and the men wore the Polish uniform. " Each division had its chaplain " —but *The Times'* Moscow correspondent, in giving these details, did not explain from where these chaplains had come.

When the Red Army approached the Polish frontier and was preparing to cross Poland, Russian propaganda began a campaign along the lines of ' promising everything ' There is no better method of convincing the

* The commander Berling was promoted lieutenant-general in the Red Army. His deputy, Major-General Karol K Swierczewski, was a Red Army officer who, under the pseudonym of " Kaiol Waltei " commanded an International Brigade during the Spanish Civil War The commander of the 1st Division (named after Tadeusz Kosciuszko) was Major-General B I Polturzycki and his deputy Major-General Boleslaw A. Kieniewicz , the artillery attached to the division was under the command of Major-General V M. Bevziuk; all three detailed from the Red Army The 2nd Division (named after General Jan Henryk Dąbrowski) was commanded by Majoi-General Antoni F Siwicki, and his deputy Col Jakob A. Pravin, both Red Army officers The 3rd Division (bearing the name of Romuald Traugutt), was commanded by Major-General S Galicki, a Red Army officer The political deputy of the Corps Commander was Col. Vladimir Sokorski, also a Red Army officer. The Chief of Intelligence in the Corps Command was Lt -Col Piotr Kozuszko, a former officer of the N.K.V D

It was clear that after the Katyn tragedy and the compulsory departure of the army of General Anders from the Soviet Union the shortage of Polish officers was one of the great difficulties Berling encountered in organising his unit He himself announced this in an interview broadcast by Moscow Radio on March 21st, 1944 :—

" Our main difficulty," he said, " was due to the scantiness of our own officer corps By offering N.C Os ample opportunities for promotion, we have overcome that difficulty "

potential victim of the advantage of surrendering the means of his own defence, or at the same time of easing the task of his destruction in the near future. During 1944, and after, Russian propaganda did not hesitate to lavishly extend the most reactionary of promises to the 'liberated' Poland-to-be. It promised everything. They swore that Poland would be democratic, with a parliamentary régime, parliamentary control of the Army, and, in short, have all those institutions about which the average Russian citizen knew so little and then only in the distorted form prevailing in his country.

The Allied correspondents in Moscow herded together in the Intourist Hotel were now flooded with material on the future of Poland and cabled the amazing news that the Kremlin "was firmly wedded to the policy of liberation and was likely to seek all means whereby the Polish people can be given speedy opportunity to take over the running of their own affairs," and that Moscow promised and anticipated for the future Poland even "the establishment of a concordat with the Vatican" Meanwhile Moscow was waging a most bitter fight in every field of her propaganda against the Holy See, the citadel of the Western world, which Russia was to attack as being the protector of the Catholic countries, and later as the body which might influence the peace terms to be imposed on Germany, by appealing for a Christian peace. And, even while Moscow was violently fighting the Vatican, Stalin received, in favoured audience, the Catholic priest, Father Orlemanski, and reiterated his promises of full religious freedom for Poland, and not only religious. *The Times*' special correspondent repeated :—*

"A year has passed since Marshal Stalin, in a statement to *The Times*, expressed hopes that relations between the Soviet Union and a reconstituted Poland would be based on the principle of mutual respect. The Russians know the Poles too well to lose sight of the fact that, whatever form of Government is chosen by liberated Poles, the religious factor is likely to play an important part in a land which is among the leading Christian countries of Europe, and Marshal Stalin, as events at home have shown, does not under-estimate the value of true faith as a buttress of the spirit of national resistance to German imperialism. Some representatives of the Polish Army in Russia have suggested that, when the Red Army enters Poland, it will often find the parish priest the most suitable local representative to make contact with"

The Red Army entering Eastern Poland would not be able to 'find the parish priest,' for from all those four thousand Catholic priests who were deported to Russia, only the few who had disguised themselves as civilians had been liberated. Only one priest who went to Russia as such was ever able to return from that country, and that one was Father Orlemanski.

There was, however, a certain amount of restraint apparent in the Soviet propaganda, which seemed to become stiff and unconvincing as soon as its officials reached a certain marked limit, beyond which they

* *The Times*, May 27th, 1944

were afraid to trespass, as for instance, one of the slogans—the "joyful discovery" (repeated in all seriousness by *The Times*) that, "experiences in the Western Ukraine . . . have given ground (to the Russians) for the hope that many patriots in occupied Poland are capable of local administration." It meant that the central administration would be preserved for the *Herrenvolk*, i.e., for the Great Russians. Certain topics were difficult even for Moscow propaganda to approach as was shown by their statement that "private enterprise for small or medium-sized industry" was to be anticipated but "the question of State or private ownership of large industrial undertakings," it was pointed out, "was not an immediate one." It became "immediate," however, as soon as the Russians occupied Poland and confiscated these undertakings.

In addition to extending numerous promises of a happy future for Poland under the guidance of the Soviet Union, Moscow propaganda, at the same time, began to emphasise its supposed achievements with regard to the care lavished on the Polish children who had been forcibly taken to Russia. Many of these children had fathers fighting among the ranks of the United Nations.

In June, 1943, the Russian Press announced the "creation of a special committee for the education of Polish children." At the beginning of 1944, they stated that "16,000 Polish children were being taught in nearly 200 Polish schools and kindergartens There were also some 50 children's homes and orphanages where between 4,000 and 5,000 children were being cared for" In the early days of 1943, the Polish Embassy had under its care 80,000 children and 545 children's homes, schools and feeding centres When the Russian authorities closed all these welfare establishments and took over the schools and orphanages, they arrested the Polish Staff and replaced them by Soviet teachers. Although the Polish Government had had 80,000 children under its care, the Soviets mentioned only 20,000 or 21,000 in their announcement. What had become of that 60,000? The Poles realised only too well that their children, now being educated under Soviet 'care,' would no longer be brought up as Poles and, as far as Poland was concerned, they were lost.

"I do not say that Polish children have an easy life here (in Russia)," remarked Moscow *Free Poland*. "But they are neither better nor worse off than all the others They are leading a severe and hard life, thinking constantly of the front line. The White Ruthenian, Ukrainian and Russian children who have escaped from the territories occupied by the Germans have not found luxuries and comfort behind the Ural. But nowhere could there be found such an attitude to children as in the U S S R"

The gist of the matter was that the Polish children did not escape before the Germans during the war, but had been kidnapped by the Russians after the invasion of Poland. Furthermore, as it has been related, the Soviets rejected the proposals of the Polish Government to be allowed to evacuate them to the British sphere of influence.

The Polish Government handed over to the Australian Government, (who had taken over Polish interests after the severance of Polish-Russian relations), the names and addresses of 271,000 Poles who had benefited up to then by the relief given by the Polish Embassy, and informed them of that unknown number of their citizens still in prisons and labour camps. The Australian Embassy, however, was unable to get any information regarding these people.*

The *Daily Telegraph* had written of " the full coincidence of Mr. Churchill's statement of British views with those of Marshal Stalin's " on the future of Poland, but, in point of fact, the agreement to divide Europe into spheres of influence did not arouse enthusiasm either in the British Empire or in America. The Anglo-Russian ' coincidence ' was the antithesis of the Anglo-Polish Treaty of 1939. This new and contradictory ' full coincidence ' was seemingly agreed upon in Teheran as far as Poland was concerned, and had established her fate without her knowledge ; this ' coincidence,' which was the break-down of the British policy of restoring the freedom of nations, meant a full victory of Russian Imperialism. Stalin was repeating the demands of Tsar Alexander I, at the Vienna Congress of 1815—' the frontier on the Bug, and the rest of Poland as a Russian protectorate.'

Russian confidence and co-operation (if they were bought) were paid for with a price heavier than the conscience of the United Nations could bear, for after all they had not gone to war to submit Europe to Soviet domination. A well-disciplined British Press supported the Prime Minister, but, subsequent to Churchill's speech of February 22, American opinion, which had looked on the Roosevelt policy at Teheran with suspicion, now reacted strongly and angrily The Government of the U.S A. had no intention for the present of taking an official stand in direct opposition to Russia, although this meant placing itself against the greater proportion of American opinion. When the British Government auctioned the Polish nation, so to speak, without her consent, by seemingly withdrawing from its pledge and limiting its guarantee to the half only of Poland, the action definitely aroused adverse comment in America. The first opportunity to speak plainly on this matter arose on May 3 (Poland's National Feast), when Congress held a debate on Polish affairs lasting several hours. Eighty-two Congressmen and twenty-six Senators emphasised that the Polish war-aims were American war-aims. At the proposal of Senator David I Walsh (Mass.), the Congress acclaimed the resolution, expressing a great anxiety regarding the future of Poland.

" The events of to-day (the Kremlin's action against Poland) are revealing the possibility of the future violation of the determined frontiers of her territory, the destruction of her sovereignty and of her established democratic government Therefore the Senate of the United States, together with

* *Manchester Guardian,* December 23rd and 31st, 1943, January 10th, 11th and 17th, 1944. *The Times,* April 17th and 19th, 1944

House of Representatives, resolves hereby to pay a tribute on this day of its Constitution of the 3rd of May, to the valiant Polish people, and to express its sympathy in their endeavours to rebuild their freedom and liberty, and is watching with the greatest anxiety and attention all the dangerous portents and is promising its help to the people of Poland until the moment when the integrity of her territory and the policy and freedom of her State will be secured and guaranteed."

The American Press quoted the speech of Democrat Michael Bradley as being the most characteristic.

" We understand that the Ambassadors of our Allies," he declared, " though sensitive to what consists of American opinion, do not always report quite sufficiently enough of this opinion to their respective governments. I am anticipating that they will give these speeches, to-day pronounced in American Congress, the necessary attention.

" Throughout her entire history, Poland has always been a victim of the ungratefulness of those for whom she has made sacrifices. She has been exploited by those who benefited from the heroism of her sons. We know that the attitude which our Government adopts at the Peace Conference will influence our Allies ! We hope that those who are now united with us by the common fight, will unite with us to compensate Poland for the sacrifices she has made I am confident that all our Allies, including Russia, will recognise that these emotions which we express here to-day do not belong to casual Sunday speeches, but represent the sincere opinion of American Congress. I trust that the Russian Ambassador will make a thorough report to his Government in Moscow, and that Moscow will understand that the representatives of the American people hold a decided opinion regarding the rights which Poland must have at the Peace Conference. We are expecting Russia to recognise this opinion, not as the expression of individual representatives, but as the sentiments of all the American peoples "

In Great Britain, the reaction against this change of British policy towards Europe, and the connivance with Russian designs, was mainly apparent in the peoples of the Empire. They showed no desire to lay down the banners under which they had entered the war in support of Britain and Europe. They might not have gathered all the details of the Churchill policy and its manoeuvres under pressing Soviet imperialism, but they saw clearly enough what would result from it. Russian propaganda of slander and ceaseless accusations against Poland might have some influence in Britain, but it certainly had none in the Empire. The impression made by those few thousand Polish exiles who had been extracted from the Soviet Union and were settled in some of the Dominions was far greater than anything Moscow might say. Poland's fight and unhappiness had become a legend throughout the world and a legend was difficult to destroy.

The first opportunity of emphasising the real feelings of the peoples of the Empire was on the occasion of the meeting of the Dominions' Prime Ministers and the subsequent ' Empire Declaration ' of May 17.

" Not one who marches with us shall be abandoned " they claimed in this Declaration. " We shall not turn from the conflict till they (the countries in the grip of the enemy) are restored to freedom . . . It is our aim that,

when the storms and passions of war have passed away, all countries now overrun by the enemy shall be free to decide for themselves their future form of democratic government.

" Mutual respect and honest conduct between nations is our chief desire. We are determined to work with all peace-loving peoples in order that tyranny and aggression shall be removed or, if need be, struck down wherever it raises its head We seek no advantages for ourselves at the cost of others.

" We affirm that, after the war, a World Organisation to maintain peace and security should be set up and endowed with the necessary power and authority to prevent aggression and violence."

Poland, for obvious reasons, was not mentioned in this Empire Declaration, but, a few days earlier, Curtin, the Prime Minister of Australia, had spoken of Poland and indeed had spoken firmly, reminding Great Britain of the pledge she had given to that country

" No blows were struck at Australia when Germany marched into Poland, but Australia knew that, in marching into Poland, Germany was marching into a strategic area which was part of a considered plan of world domination, and that the attack on Poland was as much Australia's business as if the very port of Sydney itself had been bombed by the Nazis.

"A pledge of honour had been given to Poland by Great Britain. That pledge was espoused and supported by the people of Australia. They had no material or territorial interests, it can be said, in what happened to Poland, but they had in their very souls a clear view of the spiritual consequences to them if the Nazis, by force, should take from Poland the security which Britain and France had guaranteed Poland And, therefore, in support of the vow of Britain, Australia declared itself at war with Germany."

A week after the announcement of the Empire Declaration, on May 24 the British Prime Minister gave a review of England's foreign policy and again spoke of Poland. Although he reiterated the opinion of his Government, regarding the " regulation of the Polish eastern frontier," and that " she should receive compensation at the expense of territories belonging to Germany," the general tone of his speech was more conciliatory on the whole. It seemed as if he was endeavouring to satisfy both parties, Poland and Russia as well He emphasised " we must take care to say nothing that would make agreement between these two countries more difficult in the future "—a remark which was to be the key-note of the subsequent debate in the House of Commons and the House of Lords, the members of which pressed the question of benefiting Poland at the expense of Germany almost exclusively, avoiding the essential question of settling the Polish-Russian dispute.

The British Prime Minister then spoke :

" For a long time past the Foreign Secretary and I have laboured with all our strength to try to bring about a resumption of relations between the Soviet Government and the Polish Government which we recognise, which we have always recognised since the days of General Sikorski We were conscious of the difficulty of our task and some may say we should have been wiser not to attempt it Well, we cannot accept that view. We are the Ally of both countries We went to war because Germany made an unprovoked attack upon our Ally, Poland. We have signed a 20-year treaty with our Ally, the Soviet Union, and this Treaty is the foundation

of our policy. Polish forces are fighting with our armies and have recently distinguished themselves remarkably well. Polish forces under Russian guidance are also fighting with the Soviet army against the common enemy.

" Our effort to bring about a renewal of relations between the Polish Government and Russia in London has not succeeded. We deeply regret that fact, and we must take care to say nothing that would make agreement more difficult in the future I must repeat that the essential part of any arrangement is regulation of the Polish eastern frontier, and that, in return for any withdrawal made by Poland in that quarter, she should receive other territories at the expense of Germany, which will give her ample seaboard and a good, adequate and reasonable homeland in which the Polish nation may safely dwell. We must trust that when we all engage in the struggle with the common foe, when nothing can surpass the bravery of our Polish Allies in Italy and daily on the sea, and in the air, and in the heroic resistance of the underground movement to the Germans. I have seen here men who came a few days ago out of Poland, who told me about it, and who are in relation with, and under the orders of, the present Polish Government in London. They are most anxious that this underground movement should not clash with the advancing Russian Army, but should help it, and orders have been sent by the Polish Government in London that the underground movement is to help the Russian Armies in as many ways as possible There are many ways possible in which guerillas can be successful, and we trust that statesmanship will yet find some way through

" I have the impression—and it is no more than an impression—that things are not so bad as they may appear on the surface between Russia and Poland. I need not say that we—and I think I may certainly add, the United States—would welcome any arrangement between Russia and Poland, however it was brought about, whether directly between the Powers concerned, or with the help of His Majesty's Government, or any other Government There is no question of pride on our part, only of sincere good will to both, and earnest and anxious aspirations to a solution of problems fraught with grave consequences to Europe and the harmony of the Grand Alliance. In the meantime, our relations, both with the Polish and the Soviet Governments, remain regulated by the public statements which have been made and repeated from time to time from this bench during the present war. There I leave this question, and I trust that if it is dealt with in Debate those who deal with it will always consider what we want, namely, the united action of all Poles, with all Russians, against all Germans "

The most significant extracts from the following Debate in the House of Commons were :—

Mr. Petherick (*Conservative*) · Let me say a word about Poland How should we feel if we were asked, at the end of the war, to give up East Anglia to our Allies, and to get back the Ukraine instead. I think that if Russia is approached sensibly, she may think very differently about all these problems from the way she is thinking about them now. If Germany is completely crushed, Russia may think, as we do, having a lot of experience, that it is no good allowing a number of Eires to clutter up your doorstep.

Major Vyvyan Adams (*Conservative*) I do not quite understand what is obviously troubling the Prime Minister in his anxiety about Poland . . . We are not fighting to preserve frontiers which have been fluid for centuries. . . We are fighting to destroy aggression . . . we should never forget it is a very great crusade against unprovoked aggression. When we speak of Poland, I suggest it is foolish to turn away from what is, quite clearly, the Russian point of view. It can, quite simply, be stated in this sentence—that

she wants, between her centres of industry and administration, as much territory to intervene between her and the evil centre which caused this war in Germany . . .

Mr. McGovern (*I.L.P.*) · The hon and gallant Member for West Leeds (Major Adams) has given us the usual moral cause. He says that we did not go to war for the defence of Poland. That is handing out to Members something that every person in the country realises. This country did not go to war merely for the defence of Poland, but one of the things for which it did go to war was the defence of Poland. To say otherwise at this stage would condemn us morally in the eyes of a large number of people in this country. There is the danger presented to the nation and the world of succumbing to German military power, and there are the methods employed for undermining and overcoming resistance in the various countries. Is the hon. and gallant Member satisfied that Russia is not performing the same function ; that Russia is not also attempting, by the creation of quisling governments, to undermine the will to resist of internal organisations, and then, in the name of independence, moving in and creating the same circumstances as were created by Germany previous to the war ? There can be a case for going to war to resist aggression and the insidious methods of Germany, but there can be no case for refusing to recognise the self-same methods when they are employed in Poland and elsewhere by Soviet Russia. You lose your moral case entirely and also the will to resist . . .

. . . It was said that 8,500 Polish officers were destroyed by Russians, but nobody in governmental circles may mention these things now. We have to be kind to Joe, in case he walks out of the party. Therefore, we did not say "Joe, you and your fellows murdered 8,500 Polish officers. Why did you murder them ? " Why—because it was a question of destroying the ruling class of Poland Poland had to be destroyed as a Polish national unity and the only way to destroy it was to murder the ruling class of that country. There was the creation of the Polish national army on Soviet territory with Communist quislings. They were prepared to march into Poland to set up an independent State. I have no great amount of time for the Polish Government in London or the Polish Government at any time. I have in this House often expressed my views about the Polish ruling class, but that is a very different thing from destroying the national outlook and entity of the Polish people. The Communists tried to destroy them. Propaganda goes out and the Polish people ask for an inquiry into the allegation that 8,500 of their officers were found murdered. Then Russia gets all flurried. They have been accused of this, and therefore they repudiate the policy of Polish national government in London.

Mr. Mander (*Liberal*) : It is essential that any agreement should be freely negotiated between the two States concerned, Russia and Poland The appearance of pressure or *force majeure* would make progress impossible. I should have thought the Soviet Government fully capable of displaying a magnanimous outlook.

After all, what do two towns, to which the Poles attach so much importance, matter to them compared with the good will, the friendship and the confidence not only of the Poles but of vast numbers of people all over the world ? If agreement could be reached by a friendly gesture from the Soviet Government, it would make things easy for the Poles and they would be rendering an immense service to the whole world, and not least to themselves. It is said that East Prussia should be given to the Poles in compensation for adjustments with regard to the Curzon Line. I do not think there is any connection between the two or that they should be related together. To my mind the word compensation is not the right word to

use. I think East Prussia should go to Poland in any case on strategic grounds, because to have Germans there is a danger to world peace, and I hope that will be done It may be said that would involve a transfer of population but, as the Russian armies advance through East Prussia, there will be a very rapid transfer of population

Major Lloyd (*Conservative*): It would seem as though almost final arrangements have been made in the west, but are we satisfied that we know exactly what arrangements have been made, or are in contemplation, with regard to those Eastern countries, in which we are also interested, as conquering armies pass through on the way to Berlin? Are those arrangements to be entirely unilateral at the exclusive will of the conquering army, or are they to be made not only in co-operation with the countries and the legitimate Governments of those countries, but also in accordance with the mutual agreement of the United Nations who form the great alliance?

I tried to get an answer to that pertinent, but, I do not think, impertinent, question some months ago in a foreign affairs debate, but I never got an answer and scarcely expected it. But now the time is ripe and opportune, surely, for those interested, both in Parliament and in other parts of the world, to have an answer. Is there to be any status whatever for emigre Governments, and are they to be allowed to collaborate in the occupation of their territory or are they to be excluded? What is right for the West should be right for the East. I should like to ask the Foreign Secretary whether he is prepared to accept a completely unilateral decision in the East, which he would not be able to justify in this House, if applicable to the West? I hope the right hon. Gentleman will grasp the nettle and give some satisfaction to those of us who want to know what is going to happen in those Eastern countries when they are overrun by the conquering armies of our Allies.

IN THE HOUSE OF LORDS. **Viscount Samuel** · The history of the last two hundred years has shown that Poland cannot live if she has enemies in both Russia and Germany. If she could make friends with both, that would, of course, be the best solution, but it is vital for Poland to be on terms of friendship and good will with the one or with the other. Since in present circumstances it is obvious that there can be no friendship and good will between Poland and Germany, it is essential for her to arrive at a friendly understanding with Russia, even at the cost of considerable sacrifices . .

. . . How wholeheartedly the Poles are engaged in this war has been shown by the contribution they have already made at sea and in the air, and within the last few days in the victory of Cassino, where we are proud to think that when the Allied troops entered that ruined monastery, flags of both Poland and of Britain were hoisted side by side. It is also excellent news that the underground movement in Poland has been instructed to co-operate in every way with the advancing Soviet troops and that that is now being done

. . . There is one phrase used by the Prime Minister in a previous speech which has given a number of people a good deal of concern. He was referring to the Teheran Conference, which had been held a short time earlier and he used these words .

" Marshal Stalin and I also spoke and agreed upon the need for Poland to obtain compensation at the expense of Germany both in the North and the West "

That phrase " to obtain compensation," is one that does not seem to be quite in accordance with the spirit of the Atlantic Charter and similar

declarations. It rather recalls the power politics of the early part of the nineteenth century and the eighteenth century, when the balance of power was regarded as the dominant principle in international politics .

Lord Noel-Buxton The claim of Poland is, of course, overwhelming There has always been keen sympathy with Poland because of her hard fate since 1772, when the first partition occurred Sympathy has been vastly increased by the appalling sufferings of recent times Quite apart from the question of compensating her for her territorial losses, there is the utmost desire to compensate her for the atrocious methods used against her by Germany The enormities perpetuated naturally aroused a universal wish to avenge her wrongs. But our business is to take long views of Poland's interest and to remember that such views can be obscured by the emotions of war Compensation by transfer of lands and populations to alien rule, or the deportation of peoples from their homes, is not the appropriate method. The German population concerned is solid. Germany would seek recovery at the first opportunity. Hostility would be ensured. We all feel the right of the Poles to the fullest life, but for the sake of that life their greatest interest is peace in the future.

Poles are divided on this annexation question. Some of them foresee the danger. British sympathy with Poland cannot be too great. We ought to be ready to make more sacrifices for Poland. I suggest that the true form of compensation would be economic aid from the Allies and restitution by Germany in kind We ourselves ought to take a full share, especially in financial help. The guarantee which we gave in 1939 adds greatly to our obligations. I want to urge the extreme danger of disregarding the principle of self-determination on such a large scale as is anticipated . .

Lord Vansittart . . the detachment of East Prussia from the Reich is the only conceivable way in which you can ensure to Poland free and safe access to the sea, unless you are going to revert to the timorous absurdity of the Corridor. It happens, moreover, that to detach East Prussia from the Reich is the only way to ensure against future war. . . Men are very frequently inclined to be the most critical of those whom they have wronged and that seems to be so in the case of oft-partitioned Poland During the past year, I have hardly heard a good word for Poland. On the contrary, there has been some pretty steady sneering I feel it is about time that stopped. I feel that we should think more frequently of Poland who, out of her thirty-four million original inhabitants, has already lost nine million by deportation and massacre, and we should think also more frequently of the Poland who has played such a glorious part in Southern Italy and earned the thanks of General Alexander.

The Secretary of State for Dominion Affairs (Lord Cecil) : What I suggest is important in any settlement that may eventually be reached is that if Poland is to survive—and I have no doubt we all wish the Polish nation to survive—she should be given " an ample seaboard and a good, adequate, and reasonable homeland in which the Polish nation may safely dwell." That is very important, and anything less than that, in my opinion, is likely to sow the seeds of future trouble I could not help thinking, as I listened to the noble Lord, Lord Noel-Buxton, that he almost seemed more concerned about the future of Germany than he was about the future of Poland. Let us not forget that we owe a great deal to Poland—more than we can ever repay I hope we shall never neglect her interests or abandon her in order to appease our enemies.

Lord Winster · If there is any enslaved country of Europe which deserves to be freed and to be allowed to decide its own fate without outside interference, it certainly is Poland We went to war for Polish independence;

we end it, apparently, by agreeing to take 40 per cent. of her territory away and to offer her compensation in the shape of German territory. . . . The truth of this Polish-Russian dispute is that our Government and the Allies are caught in a conflict between ethics and expediency. *The Times* of April 20 spoke of such an affair as sheer opportunism which would go far to disillusion opinion at home and abroad. Then it said, referring to these matters, that, while we wish to adhere to principle, regard must be had to the relative power of conflicting parties My Lords, that is power politics and nothing else, and we must face the fact.

In the early days of 1944, the Americans of Polish descent, without regard to political differences, had united into one powerful organisation in order to support their Mother country and take care of her interests on the continent of America. In June, a Congress was held at Buffalo, and the 3,074 delegates, representatives of the various organisations and syndicates, made an appeal to the " civilised world " in the name of the six million Polish-Americans. It read :

" We are mindful that this appeal is being written on Memorial Day, when our Nation pays tribute to those who have given their lives for the United States Many thousands of old graves of Americans of Polish ancestry, many monuments of Polish heroes, will be decorated to-day with the American flag. Thousands of mothers will weep to-day, their hearts will bleed not knowing where the graves of their beloved sons are. There is in this sacrifice a holy unity between them and all the mothers in America, Poland and other lands.

" We are also mindful that the thoughts and sentiments of this appeal are being written on the eve of the invasion of Europe. We all live in grave anticipation of news that will announce victory—and death of many. . . . To all of us there shall be only one consolation, that will redeem this great sacrifice—the knowledge that they have not died in vain. The principles for which they fought are accepted by all the nations who signed the Atlantic Charter

" We wish to remind the world that on September 1, 1939, when the German barbarians invaded Poland, there was only one boundary question. Poland's boundaries were violated by the Germans. The whole world stood up in arms because the boundaries of one nation were violated by force and brutality of another nation . . . A fourth partition of Poland, by any nation, would be dangerous to peace and tend to destroy the moral influence and responsibility of the United States.

" Poland had repeatedly rejected German attempts to win her into an alliance against Russia, always faithful to her pledges and pacts Unjustified propaganda claims that Poland may become a Fascist country. There need be no such fear Poland has been partitioned three times before—because she was a democracy—and she now self-sacrificed herself for the cause of democracy, rejecting fascism and religious oppression Russia need not fear Poland unless she fears democracy

" The Polish people will never give accord to Russian claims or grab by force. They will continue to repeat this pledge of the Charter and we Americans shall join them, because the Atlantic Charter is America's moral responsibility to humanity. We solemnly appeal to our fellow Americans and to the citizens of all civilised countries, to stand by and adhere to collective responsibility for Poland This is a test case of international morality."

LIBERATION OF EUROPE AND 'LIBERATION' OF POLAND

Almighty God ! Our sons, pride of our nation, this day have set upon a mighty endeavor, a struggle to preserve our republic, our religion and our civilisation, and to set free a suffering humanity . . .

These are men lately drawn from the ways of peace They fight not for the lust of conquest. They fight to end conquest. They fight to liberate. They fight to let justice arise, and tolerance and good will among all Thy people They yearn but for the end of battle, for their return to the haven of home . .

With Thy blessing, we shall prevail over the unholy forces of our enemy. Help us to conquer the apostles of greed and racial arrogance Lead us to the saving of our country, and with our sister nations into a world unity that will spell a sure peace—a peace invulnerable to the schemings of unworthy men. And a peace that will let all men live in freedom, reaping the just rewards of their honest toil . . .

(*President Roosevelt's Invasion Prayer*).

In an unceasing offensive begun near Moscow and on the Volga, the Red Army marched triumphantly westward from victory to victory through desolated Soviet provinces. With its approach to the frontiers of Poland, Rumania and the Baltic States, so the attitude of the Kremlin underwent a change. From " not seeking any territorial aggrandisement " it passed to a definite policy of aggression And with each passing month the shadow of Russian Imperialism over Europe loomed larger and larger That ancient Russian belief in the messianic destiny of Tsardom which had always smouldered in that country now burst into flames, and the Soviets, as heirs to the Tsarist throne, once more asserted the rights of the Great Russians, the ' chosen people,' to create order in the conquered countries. Since they already possessed a clear plan on how they intended stabilising the Soviet order in Europe, they, by this fact alone, had the strategic advantage over their companions in the Alliance. Using the cloak of ' security for their own country against Germany,' the Kremlin moved towards the absorption of the Middle Zone with its over one hundred million inhabitants ; the eastern section of it by outright seizure, and the western, by forming a chain of vassal states. Faced with this Russian policy, the Governments of the Atlantic Democracies, in that fifth year of war, now at length standing at the highest peak of their military strength, underwent an essential change of attitude towards the chief war-aim—the ' Liberation of Europe ' It appeared that they were now limiting this ' liberation ' to her Western part only. And those small countries of the Middle Zone which had turned to Britain and the United States for some help against the approaching Russian aggression, appealing for this help in fulfilment of the oft-proclaimed slogans of the Atlantic Charter, were unable to find the slightest sign of any willingness on the

part of these Powers to defend them. The advice given by the United States to Finland, telling her to surrender to the merciless demands of the Kremlin, and their final breaking-off of diplomatic relations with that country, came as a severe blow to those peoples of the Middle Zone. Although they had been ready at that stage to seize the first opportunity to come out of the war, the invasion of Europe found all of them still in the ring as collaborators of Hitler Rumania was the first to break away, but only at the time when the Allies were entering Paris and the Russians nearing Warsaw

There was a significant contrast between the treatment of the peoples of Western Europe by the Anglo-American ' crusaders ' and the treatment which the Russian ' liberators ' meted out to those peoples who had come within their reach Italy dropped out of the war with the least possible cost to herself; the Badoglio Government was recognised without question by Russia and the Allies. The French people and their de Gaulle Government were allowed complete freedom to re-arrange the internal affairs of their country unhindered. The movement of liberation in Western Europe received the utmost support from the Allies and thousands of planes dropped supplies for the French, Yugoslav and even Italian patriots in the most difficult of terrain, while captured German armaments were placed at their disposal. None of those countries had been asked to give up their territories or set up a ' friendly ' government, sponsored by a great Power.

East of Germany the situation was entirely different There, each country had been threatened by the coming ' liberators ' and each was the recipient of demands which varied from public surrender and incorporation into the Soviet Union, to a submission, masked by an apparent willingness on the part of the unfortunate country concerned. Russia was acting, indeed, as if that part of the world were predestined to become her own, as if the Kremlin, with the connivance of those Powers who had proclaimed the Atlantic Charter, was already in possession of sovereign right over these territories The " categorical " denials of Cordell Hull in Washington and Eden in London, on May 24, in the House, " that at some place or other, never specified—it may be Moscow, it may be Teheran—(they) had done a deal, it may be with the Soviet Government . . . by which they would cease to interest themselves in certain parts of Europe " could not prevent the world from assuming that some kind of mutual agreement must have existed among the Big Three concerning the division of Europe between Britain and the U S.S.R. Furthermore, it seemed that, in this division, Europe beyond Germany was to be left to the discretion of the Soviets, to a ' liberation ' of the Russian kind; a freedom as far from Western ideas as the Soviet order was from the Western conception of life. With regard to Hitler's accomplices—the peoples of the Middle Zone—the Allies, it was true, had no formal obligations towards them whatsoever, but was Poland also to be abandoned

by Britain and America as the booty of Russian Imperialism? Surely this would constitute nothing less than an indisputable breaking of the Anglo-Polish Treaty of 1939, and the Americans' withdrawal from the principles of the Atlantic Charter

In an epoch, however, when treaties were fulfilled only as long as it suited the stronger Power, such a break could not be considered as unusual. Had British diplomacy put forward the thesis in 1941, to the effect that Britain had pledged Polish 'independence' and not the 'frontiers of Poland, and the integrity of her territories' for this very purpose? These commitments of the Anglo-Polish Treaty had been signed five days before the outbreak of war and, therefore, may not have been remembered by the British; on the other hand, during the years of war which followed, those same commitments were referred to publicly on numerous occasions by different British statesmen, and during those same years British propaganda had unrestrictedly linked them with the justice and honour of the British nation. Those same commitments were, indeed, very deeply imprinted on the heart and brain of Britain and the United States, and it was a sheer impossibility to destroy the noble feelings of the Great Democracies

At this stage of the event, it certainly would have been foolhardy in any case to publicly announce the abandonment of Poland to her fate. It was Moscow who discovered the method by which they could safely proceed with the annexation of the Polish Republic, a method which was calculated not to arouse too great a wave of indignation or suspicion in the countries of democracy. The Soviets merely once more applied those tactics which had proved so successful in the conquest and enslavement of the Ukraine. The plan of the Kremlin might be recapitulated as follows: Stalin's aim for Poland was her liberation and the establishment of a 'strong, integral and independent State' under the condition of a 'close alliance' At the same time, the Kremlin intended conducting an action for the subordination of the country on the following lines. Firstly, the leading element would be proclaimed 'Fascists' or 'German collaborators' and marked down for extermination, while secondly, the remainder would be treated as the 'sympathisers' or 'potential sympathisers' of the Soviets who were expressing a 'desire' to unite with them. The internal disintegration of the Polish community would be conducted with the assistance of a sponsored government comprised of their own agents and backed by all that powerful apparatus which they had at their disposal in the Red Army and the N K.V.D. Any resistance of the Polish nation, thus completely isolated from abroad, would be effectively paralysed within the country itself The Kremlin only required two things from the Allied Governments in order to expedite the work of establishing Stalin's Poland One was that pressure be brought to bear on the Polish Government in order that it should be urged to come to an agreement with Russia's proposals, and the other that the Polish

Press in America and England should be muzzled. Meanwhile the regimented Allied Press was to support the Soviet action by repeating the information about Poland invented by the Russian propaganda bureau, namely, a flow of abuse against the Polish Government

How successfully this last request was carried out can be seen from the policy of the Allies towards Poland in 1944, and from the fact that, after Churchill's speech of February 22, 1944, or rather, after Teheran, ninety per cent. of the information in the English Press regarding Poland originated from Moscow While Warsaw waged a desperate battle in the August of that year, all news from authentic Polish sources was in the majority of cases ignored by this Press. On August 25, the official *Dziennik Polski* in London complained bitterly that: " The entire world Press, except the English and Russian, are full of news and communiques wired from the Polish Headquarters "

The greatest blackmail of history had commenced—the attempt to enslave one Ally by another 'Ally of its Allies ' in the war. The leading element of the Polish nation which had deserved so much, if only by reason of its unceasing armed opposition to the Germans, and its resistance, organised throughout five years of unparalleled ordeals and hardship, the element which had proved worthy of the most brilliant pages in the record of this war, was now being accused by Soviet Russia of ' treason to the Allied cause.' Moscow simply proclaimed the most eminent of Polish citizens ' German collaborators ' and marked them down for trial and execution along with the German war criminals.

When the Romans defeated their enemy, it was customary to place his gods among their own in the Capitol. The Russians did not concern themselves with the gods, but, after their occupation of any Polish town, the strains of the Polish national anthem were heard over the Moscow radio, while at the same time the bodies of the underground leaders, executed by the N.K V.D., were exhibited in the main squares of this town ' liberated ' by the Red Army.

In the early summer of 1944, Poland was still beyond the reach of Moscow, but nevertheless the Kremlin began to take the first steps towards laying the foundations of this ' good-will and desire ' of the Polish people for a close alliance with the Soviets. To this end they began to create, from a section of the Russian people, legions of ' Polish citizens' who would be ready, in the near future, to express their ' freewill and desire ' for an allegiance with Russia.

On June 22, the Supreme Soviet of the U.S S.R., usurping the sovereign rights of the Polish Government issued a Decree whereby any Soviet citizen who had served or was serving in the Soviet-Polish Forces in Russia, or who was connected in any way with this army, had the ' right ' to adopt Polish citizenship, and this ' right ' was also extended to his family.

" The above Decree was to be also applied " ran the official comment, " to the inhabitants of the western areas of the Ukraine and Byelorussian (White Ruthenian) Socialist Soviet Republics, as well as to other Soviet citizens of Polish nationality in other areas of the Soviet Union."

Requests for the granting of Polish citizenship were to be addressed to a Commission of the Supreme Council, which would co-opt representatives of the ' Union of Polish Patriots.'

This Decree was to be widely applied, and affected those Poles who had received Soviet citizenship in 1939 or later, besides those inhabitants of the Polish settlements in Siberia, or elsewhere in distant regions of Russia who had retained from generation to generation their language and national customs

By this same Decree, persons of Polish descent who were not born in Poland, but who had come to Russia from other countries and taken Soviet citizenship, could also have the right to take Polish citizenship

This Soviet Decree, which forced Polish citizens who had never lost their nationality to apply again for their rights of citizenship, was without precedence in the history of international relations. According to international law, and the recognised rules of the entire world, " all that the Soviet Government could have done, in any case," wrote the *Economist*, " was to free individuals from Soviet citizenship as only a Polish Government had the authority to accept them as Polish citizens."

By issuing this Decree, the Supreme Soviet of the U.S S R. was able to pave the way for any Russian to adopt Polish nationality in Soviet Poland, and it could not be denied that, in the event of the necessity arising, these people, together with their families, would constitute not hundreds of thousands, but several million ' Polish citizens ' with a corresponding number of votes at their disposal. It was an improved version of the voting in the plebiscites held in Silesia and East Prussia after the First Great War, and of Hitler's ' tourists ' scheme in Austria and Bohemia of 1938-1939 In the case of the Ukraine—' Ukrainian citizenship ' had been handed out by the Kremlin to so many Great Russians and others that the Ukrainians themselves were ousted from all positions of authority (See Vol. I, p 217).

This freely arranged change of allegiance from one country to another, was a characteristic feature of the mental make-up of the Soviets. Its base lay in the eternal conviction of the Russian that only his Government was the true Government, and it had its roots in the belief immemorial of the divine right of this Government above all others.

Having severed diplomatic relations with the Polish Government in the spring of 1943, the Kremlin, at the intimation of Britain and the United States, appeared willing to renew them, but only on the condition of the total surrender of that Government to Russia. But despite the pressure of the British Foreign Office, the Poles could not go the lengths of committing what amounted to a virtual suicide. Moscow played for time, and one year was to elapse before any visible change occurred in the situation. During that year, with the assistance of Great Britain, the

Kremlin finally achieved the co-operation of the Polish Underground Army, without any concession, or promise of concession, on its part in return Hopes had been expressed that as the Red Army entered Poland, so a suitable moment would be reached to effect an agreement between the two countries; such hopes, however, were pronounced only by those without knowledge of the Russian mentality. Was it logical that the Kremlin, who had been responsible for the breaking-off of relations with Poland, and who had persistently and stubbornly repulsed any attempt at restoring them, would, in that hour of triumph, change its attitude towards the country its forces were then in the process of occupying? The Red Army had hung or shot those Commanders of the first of the Polish Underground troops who, coming forward to greet them as fellow-combatants, persisted in firmly adhering to their determination to remain loyal to the Polish Government. The shadow of the Russian gallows spread over Poland and increased the already existing mistrust of the Soviets.

When the Red Army crossed the river Bug in Central Poland (the 'Ribbentrop-Molotov Line' of September 28, 1939) on July 25, 1944, Moscow's Foreign Office announced that by so doing the "Soviet Forces" were "crossing the Soviet-Polish frontier and had thus entered Poland." Moscow laid the greatest stress on having crossed this 'frontier line,' although, in effect, no Power, apart from Germany during the time of its partnership with Moscow, had recognised it as such Thus, without any further explanation, Moscow *de jure caduco* announced the establishment of her new frontier with Poland.

"The Soviet Forces," ran the subsequent statement,* "entered Polish territory inspired by the sole determination to smash the enemy, the German armies, and to aid the Polish people in their task of liberating the country from the yoke of the German invaders and to re-establish an independent, strong and democratic Poland

"The Soviet Government declares that it regards the military operations of the Red Army on Polish territory as an action on the territory of a sovereign and friendly Allied State

"In connection with this the Soviet Government does not intend to establish on Polish territory its own administrative organs, as it considers this to be the task of the Polish people In view of this the Soviet Government has decided to conclude with the Polish Committee of National Liberation an agreement stipulating the relations between the Soviet military command and the Polish administration

"The Soviet Government declares that it does not pursue the aim of acquiring any part of Polish territory or of changing the Polish social order."

* *Pravda*, on July 26th, hailed this document as being one of the greatest significance in the history of the struggle for liberation against Hitlerite imperialism and recalled earlier statements of Stalin which had repudiated, on behalf of the U.S.S.R., any claims to foreign territory and which refuted any intentions of imposing the Soviet regime on the Slavonic or any other enslaved nation in Europe. "From the moment when the Soviet troops first set foot on Polish soil the Polish people felt themselves masters of their own land."

According to *Pravda* the Polish Committee of National Liberation was the "only lawful temporary organ of executive power in the liberated areas."

There was no mention of the Polish Government in this Soviet Statement The appointment of the 'Committee' in question had been announced in the Polish language on the Moscow radio. It stated that by a Decree dated July 21, 1944, and after nearly five years of war, the 'Polish National Council of Liberation' (K R N., or Krajowa Rada Narodowa, i.e, the Polish Soviet), supposedly functioning in Warsaw, had set up a 'Polish Committee of National Liberation' (P.K.W.N, or Polski Komitet Wyzwolenia Narodowego) "as a provisional executive authority to lead the nation's struggle for liberation, to secure its independence and the re-establishment of the Polish State."

Presided over by Boleslaw Bierut,* the 'National Council of Liberation' assumed supreme authority over the 'Union of Polish Patriots' in the U.S S R The 'National Council of Liberation' directed the 'Committee of Liberation' to establish its temporary headquarters on the territory occupied by the Red Army, in the small town of Chelm in Central Poland. The 'Chelm Committee,' (termed the 'Lublin Committee' after having been transferred to that town), closely resembled an analogical puppet inaugurated by the Bolsheviks in Bialystok in 1920 as they advanced towards Warsaw.

The Chairman and Head of the Department of Foreign Affairs was Edward Osubka, using the assumed name of Morawski. Osubka, an unknown personality in the Polish political life, was identified by the Underground as a former member of the Polish Socialist Party in some

* There is very little available information about this agent of the Comintern and typical shadow figure, Bierut. He was practically unknown in Poland, where apparently he had only paid short visits During one such visit in 1932, Bierut was arrested on the charge of espionage and subversive activities against the Polish State He was convicted and sentenced to seven years' imprisonment. As a Soviet citizen he was exchanged in the following year for Poles who had been imprisoned in the Soviet Union

Bierut, supposedly of Polish birth, was employed in the Polish Department of the Comintern from the time of the revolution and was in the Prague and Vienna branch of this Department for many years. The mere fact of his existence proves that he could not be considered as a Pole or rather as a Polish Communist, since he had survived the great purges, including Stalin's purge during which all Polish Communists who sought refuge in Russia had been liquidated. Bierut assumed a number of incognitos and his real identity was unknown. Apparently Bierut is derived from the first syllables of two names under which he had been sentenced, Bie-nkowski and Rut-kowski This man reappeared on Polish territory in September, 1939, accompanying the Red Army and acting as one of the agents who denounced the Poles He was largely instrumental in directing their deportation or execution. It seems Bierut penetrated into German-occupied Poland in December, 1941, where he endeavoured to organise the nucleus of a pro-Soviet organisation Attended by Osubka-Morawski he appeared in Moscow in March 1944, after an unsuccessful venture The two men, plus other Comintern agents, now became representatives of a 'Delegation' sent by the supposedly existing 'Home National Council' which was finally, together with the 'Polish Union of Patriots,' to emerge as the Polish Committee of National Liberation, i e, the 'Lublin Committee'.

The Soviet Press released no information about Bierut apart from alluding to the seven years imprisonment imposed on him in Poland, as the result of his 'anti-Fascist activities'

small town. He had been expelled from that Party, and became an agent of the Comintern. Moscow radio now brought him before the public as a political personality. The figure-heads were two vice-chairmen, Andrzej Witos and Wanda Wasilewska. Two Soviet Generals, Zymierski and Berling were, respectively, head of the Department of National Defence, and deputy.

Thus, after nearly five years of Poland's struggle against Germany and when the Second Great War was nearing its end, the Soviets set up this ' Committee of Liberation ' with the object of receiving from them a formal resignation from the Eastern half of Poland for the benefit of Russia, and secondly, to insert the remainder of the country more easily within the framework of the new Soviet European order. Thus, to obtain the legal title to this annexation, the Committee in its manifesto " called forth by the fighting nation and the sole legal source of authority in Poland," repudiated the Polish Government (" the Polish emigré Government in London and its agency in Poland "), as an " illegal and self-styled authority " and immediately signed an 'Agreement ' with Russia at the Kremlin on July 26, 1944, concerning the administration of the Polish territories west of the ' Curzon Line.' At long last the Soviets were able to establish that body which in its nebulous form had appeared so frequently as a threat in their propaganda—their own ' friendly ' Polish Government, although for the time being it was still known as the ' Committee.' The concluded agreement was almost word for word identical with that concluded between the Soviets and Dr. Benes' Government in London on April 30, a similarity ignored by Soviet propaganda The main points in the Agreement were that :—" the supreme power in the zone of military operation where the Red Army is fighting on Polish territory . . . is vested in the Soviet Commander-in-Chief," that is, Marshal Stalin, and " the Polish forces will be under the Soviet Commander-in-Chief in operational matters . ", furthermore, the " Polish Committee . . will create the machinery for recruiting men for the Polish armed forces and ensure active co-operation with the Soviet Commander-in-Chief."

In this manner, the Soviets, who had undertaken the recruitment to the Army in Eastern Poland themselves, now, in the remaining half of that country, saw to it that this same task would be performed for them by their appointed ' Committee.' Within a few weeks the Soviet News Agency was able to state that the ' Committee ' had proclaimed the mobilisation of four age groups, officers, N.C O.s and military specialists, and that ten other groups, also liable for military service, were to be registered. These recruits to the Soviet Polish army were obliged to swear " fidelity to the Polish Nation, the Polish Republic and to the National Council of Liberation . . . so help me God ! "

The ' Committee of National Liberation ' had its predecessor in Poland in the so-called ' Targovica Confederation ' installed by the Russians at

the end of the eighteenth century during the partition of Poland. The Polish Republic had acclaimed their new progressive Constitution on 3rd May, 1793. It gave their country a strong government and numerous reforms. Meanwhile, Catherine the Second of Russia created a similar Committee from a few of her satellites in Poland who, at her behest, protested against this new Constitution and appealed to Russia for support. Duly given, this support resulted in an immediate invasion of Poland by the Russian Army under the slogan of the ' defence of Polish freedom ' and her ' liberation ' from the legal government and newly-established Constitution. The Committee, known as the ' Targovica Confederation,' served as a cloak for Russian rule of prevalence and the deportation to Siberia, until finally they openly annexed the country.

The method of the Chelm Committee was identical. It demanded the abolition of the 1935 Constitution which had invested a strong power in the Republic, and it issued a manifesto along the same lines, seeking the protection of Russia.

' Targovica ' had become synonymous with State treason, and the Polish people were to associate this name with the Chelm ' Committee of Liberation '

This ' Committee ' echoed the Soviet slogans of ' fighting the Fascists in Poland,' just as the Targovica Confederation had been prepared to fight the 'Jacobins,' proclaimed by the Russia of those days as the chief enemy of humanity in general. In the Russo-Prussian Pact in 1793, which divided the Polish Republic, Markov, its Russian originator, had inserted phrases to the effect that the Powers partitioning Poland " established firmly that the same spirit of revolution and dangerous tendencies, which are now dominating in France, are ready to explode in the Polish Kingdom and in the immediate neighbourhood of their territories . . . " Therefore . . . " they felt in duty bound to strengthen the means of caution, in order to secure their own subjects from the effects of such bad and contagious example . . . "

In its manifesto the ' Chelm Committee ' emphasised that :—

. . . " The gates of the Republic will be barred to Hitlerite agents and those who betrayed their country in September, 1939. We ex-communicate the loutish agents of the reactionary movement who, by splitting internal unity and by their attempts to embroil Poles against each other, have been playing into the hands of Hitlerism."

But surely " those who betrayed their country in September, 1939," could only have been the Communists who, executing the orders issued by Moscow (then associated with Germany), turned against Poland and " have been playing into the hands of Hitlerism."

The ' Committee ' called upon the people of Poland to assist the Red Army :—

"Attack the Germans," it said in its manifesto, " cripple their transport, supply information to Polish and Russian soldiers, join the Polish Army, which will avenge the defeat of September, 1939.

'Rise for the glory of Poland, for the return of the ancient Polish Pomorze (the land bordering the Baltic), and for Polish Silesia, for Eastern Prussia, for a wide outlet to the sea and for Polish frontier posts on the Oder."

A fresh point in this manifesto (vaguely referred to in previous Russian statements) was that the Western frontier of Poland should be on the Oder. Even the most ardent of Polish nationalists had hesitated to put forward a claim such as this. The area as far as the river Oder had, it is true, long ago formed part of Poland, but in the main it had been germanised. Polish aspirations on the West had not gone beyond those territories which still possessed a fair percentage of Polish population, namely, Silesia on the Upper Oder, part of Pomorze (Pomerania) and East Prussia. If Poland's frontier was to be established on the Lower Oder, then several million Germans would be within the boundaries of Poland. Moscow's solution was 'expel the Germans,' and since she had also linked the acquisition of these territories with the loss to the Polish Republic of her Eastern provinces, including the towns of Lwów and Wilno, there could be no doubt but that such claims by the 'Committee' were made at the instigation of the Soviet Government. It was difficult to expect any enthusiasm among the Poles for 'compensation' of this type.

Immediately on its appearance, the 'Committee,' through the medium of the Moscow radio, pronounced its first decrees. These included the "assumption of Supreme Command over the Polish Army in Russia" and its "unification with the People's Army," supposed to exist in Poland and the creation of a "Supreme Command with General Rola-Zymierski as the Commander-in-Chief." *

The 'Committee' anticipated its future policy by claiming "full alliance with the Soviets," and announced that "all organisations which existed under the German occupation will be dissolved and the Fascists persecuted within the entire strength of the law." There was an unmasked threat to fight the Polish Underground State clearly expressed in this manifesto.

* Zymierski was an ex-General of the Polish Army His real name was Lyzwinski but as his brother had robbed and murdered a well-known publisher in Cracow before the last war, he had changed his name assuming one which belonged to an old Polish family, Zymirski. In fact, he posed as a descendant of this same family who had protested and taken the matter to court. The accused was obliged to find another name and he eventually added a character to the one he had already chosen and called himself 'Zymierski.' During the early days of the Great War he fought in Pilsudski's Legions. After the outbreak of the Revolution in Russia at the beginning of 1917, when Pilsudski turned against Austria and Germany and was imprisoned by the latter, Zymierski enlisted in the Polish Wehrmacht formed by the Germans Later he was appointed a Quartermaster in the Polish Ministry of War and in 1927, was accused of accepting a bribe from a French firm regarding a supply of gas-masks He was tried, found guilty, deprived of his rank and sentenced to five years' imprisonment.

After the invasion of Poland in 1939, Zymierski escaped to Rumania, where he endeavoured to get his case re-opened But, although he had been close to Sikorski during his career, the latter refused to grant his request.

The denouncements which Zymierski levelled against the leaders of the Warsaw rising in August and September, 1944, were eloquent of this type of man

The Polish Government, through its P A.T. Agency, commented that :

" The persons included in this ' Committee of National Liberation ' are mostly completely unknown to the Polish people, and represent nobody except a small Communist group without any influence "

" It is an attempt by a handful of usurpers to impose on the Polish nation a political leadership which is at variance with the overwhelming majority."

Out of the fifteen members comprising this ' Committee,' ten were newly-converted Communists belonging to the Moscow ' Union of Polish Patriots,' who were already residing in the Russian capital. It was, therefore, a typical Soviet robot of the emigré type, and it closely resembled the ' friendly governments ' which had been brought into being for the Baltic States. Among the members of this ' Committee ' were also, it appeared, those who could be placed in the category of deportees who had been ' invited ' to join it. In the Soviet régime such ' invitations ' could be ignored only under the pain of death.*

The ' Committee,' composed from unknown personalities or men such as Zymierski or Rzymowski (a critic who had been expelled from the Polish Literary Academy after being convicted of plagiarism on Bertrand Russell's book), did not seem sufficiently weighty enough even to Moscow. Therefore, Soviet propaganda was careful to stress the fact that Stalin was watching the ' Committee ' " in order to convince himself that it was capable of coping with the tasks which lay ahead Should it, in his opinion, prove incapable, then another solution must be reached." The same propaganda emphasised that this ' Committee ' was supported in Poland, not only by the Communists (less numerous in that country than in Britain), but also by the peasants. One thing, however, could not be ignored, the Soviet's puppet was certainly backed by the guns of the Red Army, and, under this protection, had begun to officiate as an administrative body.

In order to stifle the qualms of London and Washington and at the same time following the traditions of 1920, Moscow announced that this ' Committee ' had been created in Chelm, and therefore on Polish soil. " The Soviets," continued the official Moscow comment, " recognised its validity, since they had to have some administration in the liberated Polish territories." " Their attitude towards the ' Committee,' " explained one of the Moscow foreign correspondents and Soviet mouthpiece in the *Daily Telegraph* on July 25, " is substantially the same as that which the Allies have accorded to de Gaulle in liberated France." Thus the Kremlin began the final moves to liquidate the Underground Polish State Authorities and with it, the Government in London, determined to prevent the latter from returning to take up office in Poland.

Russia's political activity in ' liberated ' Poland was bound to cause some confusion in London and Washington. The reaction of these two

* The Germans, at the request of the Russians, had handed over Wasilewska's daughter, and thus the Soviets had a hostage for the amenable behaviour of the mother It was the same story with regard to the Witos family.

Powers was merely to increase the pressure on the Government of Poland and to endeavour to persuade it to accede to Moscow's demands and ... capitulate. Soviet propaganda now openly declared that the Kremlin had no further wish to deal with " the Fascist clique in London which terms itself the Polish Government " But it seemed that things were not to proceed quite so smoothly for the Soviets as outward appearances would have led one to believe. Under British pressure, the Polish Premier, Mikolajczyk, on July 23, 1944, once more publicly advertised his desire to achieve an agreement with the Soviets. Although no normal diplomatic relations existed between the two countries, he flew to Cairo on the next day, declaring his willingness to continue his journey as far as Moscow. While still en route the Kremlin announced its full recognition of the Chelm Committee of National Liberation, and on the basis of the aforementioned agreement with it, exchanged ' diplomatic representatives ' forthwith. Thus, when the Polish Prime Minister finally arrived in Moscow, he found a representative rival ' Polish Government ' already functioning in that country.

The choice of a diplomatic agent from this ' Committee ' was a minor detail, but the selection of Nicholas Bulganin as the representative to be sent to Chelm was a proof of the importance which Moscow attached to this post, since he was destined to be the Gauleiter of Russian-occupied Poland. Nicholas Bulganin was a Chairman of the Moscow Soviet and a member of the Central Committee of the Communist Party and President of the State Bank of the U.S.S.R. The importance of this man in the Party and in Soviet bureaucracy could be judged by the fact that, when in 1942, certain prominent personages in the Party received military ranks, he was nominated ' Colonel General ' one rank lower than Stalin himself.

After the diplomatic relations between Russia and Poland had been broken off, the interests of the Polish Embassy in Moscow were left in in the care of the Australian Government. The Australian Legation at this junction received a notification from the Commissariat of Foreign Affairs that, as representatives had now been exchanged between the U.S.S.R. and the ' Polish Committee,' the Soviet Government no longer considered it necessary for the Australian Government to undertake the protection of the Polish Legation since responsible persons from the ' Polish Committee ' would now take over that duty.

" This, in my opinion, is a hopeful moment for Poland," considered Churchill in the House of Commons on August 2, " for whose rights and independence we entered the war against Germany. We therefore did our best, my right hon friend (the Foreign Secretary) and I and others, late into the night, to promote the visit of M. Mikolajczyk and members of his Cabinet to Moscow, where Marshal Stalin was willing to receive them. The President of the United States was also favourable. How could it be otherwise in these matters, considering his deep interest in the Polish question ? The Russian armies now stand before the gates of Warsaw. They bring the liberation of Poland in their hands. They offer freedom,

sovereignty, and independence to the Poles. They ask that there should be a Poland friendly to Russia. This seems to me very reasonable, considering the injuries which Russia has suffered through the Germans marching across Poland to attack her.

" The Allies would welcome any general rally or fusion of both Polish forces, those who are working with the Western Powers and those who are working with the Soviet Union We have several gallant Polish divisions fighting the Germans in our armies now, and there are others who have been fighting in Russia Let them come together We desire this union, and it would be a marvellous thing if it could be proclaimed, or at least its foundations laid, at the moment when the famous capital of Poland, which so gallantly defended itself against the Germans, had been liberated by the bravery of the Russian armies."

In this short speech Churchill touched on many problems which concerned Poland. The optimistic opinion of the British Prime Minister was based rather on wishful thinking than on the reality of the situation. After friendly persuasion on the part of Churchill and Roosevelt, Marshal Stalin pronounced himself " willing to receive " the Polish Prime Minister (he was accompanied by Romer, the Foreign Minister, and Grabski, the Chairman of the National Council in London), but he did not receive them as the representatives of a sovereign Power, neither was he ready to discuss any return to the Treaty of July 30, 1941

At the Kremlin, Stalin put demands before Mikolajczyk which exclusively related to military problems. He requested that all Poland's resources should be placed at his disposal; that the Polish Home Army be put under Russian command and the right of requisition be granted to the Russian troops, etc. Furthermore, Stalin insisted that the forces of the Underground Army should make themselves known to the Russians, upon which they would be " supplied with weapons and equipment." He emphasised that he would not, under any circumstances, tolerate any underground organisation on the territories occupied by the Red Army. When the Polish Premier commented that the Soviet troops had already disarmed detachments of the Polish Home Army and imprisoned the officers, where, in accordance with instructions, they had contacted the Soviets, Stalin retorted that this had occurred east of the ' Curzon Line,' and that any similar cases which had taken place west of this ' Line ' must have been the result of some misunderstanding. He did not appear concerned with the frontier or, for that matter, with any political problem, and " expressed the wish " as the Russian official statement put it, " that every question connected with the situation in Poland should be discussed between M Mikolajczyk and the ' Polish Committee of Liberation ',"" which represented, according to Marshal Stalin's view, a section of the Polish people who had the " right to participate in the government."

Such a ' wish ' was, in fact, nothing more than an attempt to compel the legal Prime Minister of Poland to discuss matters appertaining to the future of his country with the puppet of a foreign Power, and by this action, bring it into the international arena as a political factor. Mikolajczyk had

been warned against such a move by his Cabinet but under British pressure he weakened and compromised by stating that he " was willing to talk with all Poles." Additional evidence of the pressure which the Soviets were able to exert was that the conference with the representatives of the ' Chelm Committee,' brought post-haste to Moscow, was held in the building of the Polish Embassy which had been occupied by Rzymowski as the " representative of the Committee " accredited to the Moscow Government Thus the Prime Minister of Poland found himself in a building of the Polish Republic as a guest

The talks took place on August 6 and 7, and towards the end were presided over, or, more strictly, were controlled by Molotov, the Foreign Commissar of the U.S.S.R. These talks had no positive results and indeed could not have achieved any, since it was not Moscow's intentions that they should. The Kremlin found it useful at this juncture to uphold a situation in which they represented themselves as willing to come to an agreement with the Polish Government. It made it easier in the meantime to continue with the extermination of the Polish leading element in that part of Poland which they had already occupied and helped to confuse the picture of Polish-Russian relationship for the world.

The Constitution headed the list of affairs at the Conference table and the ' Committee ' demanded that Mikolajczyk's Government should abolish it, an action naturally beyond their power. Any change in the Constitution rested solely with Parliament. The Committee's demand was made firstly in order to create a stir, the subject of the Constitution was as good as any other for that purpose, and secondly, because a return to the Constitution of 1921 made the executive organ of the State very weak—it had been established just after the first Great War while still under its influence, and had achieved no balance between the legislative and executive bodies. In 1935, the Constitution was altered to follow the lines of America, giving great power to the President. In any case the question of this or that Constitution was purely an internal Polish problem, but Moscow had put this question as the *conditio sine qua non* for any further parleys. Furthermore, the Soviet ' Committee of Liberation ' demanded that the Polish Government should immediately renounce the Eastern provinces in favour of Russia and offered Mikolajczyk the position of Premier, on condition that, in the new government, fourteen members would be from the ' Committee ' and three from the Poles in London, although not necessarily from their Government.

The " discussion of the problems concerning Polish-Russian relations with Marshal Stalin " ended in a fiasco, and the Polish Premier, who did not hold the right to accede to his demands, left for London. The Russian communiqué expressed the hope that, although " no definite agreement had been reached . . . a continuation of the conversation was to be anticipated " as Moscow expected Mikolajczyk to convince his Cabinet of the necessity of accepting the proffered terms.

WARSAW !

Polish people, your sons have fought in Norway, in the battle of France, in the battle of Britain, in Africa, in Italy, on the seven seas and in the wide spaces of the air, and now once again, they are fighting on the soil of France.

Polish people, you cannot be abandoned by the world and you won't be, for even a Pilate could not wash his hands

(Camille Huysman's address to the Polish workers fighting in Warsaw on August 7, 1944).

The bravery of the people of Warsaw will never be forgotten. When the citizens of Warsaw were being crucified, the people who should have been bringing them help when the nails were put through their hands were the people who stood at the foot of the cross and hurled jeers at them. (Sir Patrick J. Dollan's speech in London, on October 11, 1944).

During the past three years Moscow had consistently called on the Polish people to rise up against their German oppressors, even when the Red Army had been fighting on the Volga, a thousand miles from Warsaw, and any such attempt at a rising at that time would easily have been squashed by the German occupying forces. Yet, when in 1944, the Poles mobilised complete divisions in the eastern part of their country, in the Volyn and Wilno provinces, in the Lublin province and in the South, and struck at the Germans in co-ordination with the Red Army's progressive drive into Poland, Moscow showed herself dissatisfied with their action, for the overlords of the Kremlin were anxious to see the anticipated rising in Poland led by Communists who would come forward to greet the Red troops as 'liberators.'

Stalin, during his talk at the begining of August with the Polish Premier in Moscow, had already shown a remarkable lack of interest in the achievements of the Polish Home Army and had coldly remarked that "it would be much better if the Poles had stayed at home and grown corn, since the Red Army would defeat Germany without their help and corn is necessary for all"—an entirely different version to those propaganda appeals urged by the Soviets during the past years. The Polish detachments which the Soviet troops had begun to encounter in their offensive of 1944 had distinctly affirmed that, although they were ready and willing to collaborate with the Red Army in their fight against the Germans, they had begun their action at the order of their own Polish Government and their own Commander-in-Chief.

Moscow had endeavoured to present these troops of the Home Army as Underground Forces which had been organised and installed in Poland by elements purely pro-Soviet in character, but the strength of these troops and their activities did not permit of the Soviets continuing such misrepresentation for any length of time. A Polish national force would

not fit in with Moscow's intentions regarding Poland, and its suppression was only a matter of time—it was, in fact, started by Moscow without further delay in those areas already flooded by the Russian armies and cut off from all the normal channels of communication with the world.

Although the destruction of the Home Army had been undertaken in complete silence by the Soviets, and was not reported by their Press, the Polish Underground could not be spirited away in a few days, therefore, news of the Soviet's actions against this Army spread like wild-fire throughout Poland. Wilno was a case in point The part which the troops of the Home Army had played in bringing about the fall of this town was not mentioned by the Russians; on the contrary, Moscow press and radio enthusiastically acclaimed it as the 'liberation of the capital of the Lithuanian Soviet Republic' by their Red Army. The Polish action was, generally speaking, placed to the credit of supposed Lithuanian partisans "The Lithuanian people, by their struggle, have voted daily for a Soviet Lithuania," wrote *Pravda* ambiguously No country in Europe is more Catholic or nationalist than Lithuania, nor more opposed to the Russian régime, and statements of this kind could hardly be taken in earnest.

By the end of July, 1944, Marshal Rokossovsky's armies had rapidly approached the Vistula, and there was every hope that they would soon cross the river and occupy Warsaw. If at this moment the Polish Home Army in the capital could then begin its action against the occupant, it could proceed to gain control of the most important railway centre on the Vistula and cut off the Germans in their further retreat behind the river. This idea had also evidently occurred to Moscow, for, in addition to the usual routine appeals, the Soviet radio now made a special point of calling on the Poles in Warsaw to rise and take up arms 'against the oppressor,' despite the fact that Moscow had opposed the continuation of British armament supplies to the Home Army after the Teheran Conference These specific appeals to Warsaw began from June 2—a typical broadcast on July 30 ran :—

"Warsaw is trembling from the noise of guns. The Soviet armies are going forward. They are already in front of the Praga suburb. They are coming as liberators The Germans expelled from Praga will endeavour to make a stand inside the capital. They will destroy everything. A rising in Warsaw will be the signal for a mass attack on the Germans. Everyone in the capital must be enlisted in the Army of Resistance to stop the destruction of public buildings by the Germans. All must help the Red Army to cross the Vistula by giving information and easing the crossing of the river The million inhabitants of Warsaw must convert themselves into an army of a million, fighting for freedom and death to the invader.

"Those who have never bowed their heads to the Hitlerite power," blared Moscow, "will again, as in 1939, join battle against the Germans, this time for the decisive action . . For Warsaw, who has not yielded but fought on, the hour of action has already arrived . . "

In the last days of July these appeals were repeated several times during every twenty-four hours The voice of Moscow did not and could not influence the Polish people. Five years previously, when Warsaw had been fighting the Germans against desperate odds, the same Russian radio stations had called on the people of the Polish capital to lay down their arms and resign themselves to their fate, " since the Polish State (they repeated Molotov's words) had virtually ceased to exist."

At the end of July, Warsaw heard the rumble of Soviet artillery resounding behind the Vistula The Germans had begun to evacuate their offices from the city and start a large-scale round-up of men for work on fortifications The moment cherished in the minds of the people of the Capital during those five long years of German occupation, the moment for the rising, had come at last.

The responsibility for choosing the time to begin this action in Poland (an action referred to as " Burza," — Tempest) was vested, by the authorisation of the Polish Government, in three men in Warsaw, Klonowski (Jan Jankowski) the Government's Delegate and Vice-Premier, General Bór, Commander-in-Chief of the Home Army,* and to Kazimierz Puzak, Chairman of the Council of National Unity. These men decided upon five o'clock in the afternoon of August 1. The information that several German armoured divisions were approaching the Vistula in order to cross it eastward and stem the approaching Russians, whose vanguards were then ten miles from the city, was the deciding factor . . . Some of these German divisions were directed towards Warsaw, the others to the north of the capital, to Modlin. The first outcome of the rising in Warsaw was the blocking of the bridges against the advancing Germans. These bridges became the main objective of some bitter fighting and passed from hand to hand several times during the ensuing battles.

The Poles succeeded in occupying almost the whole of the city in the first three days, and the Germans, reduced to defending isolated fortified buildings had, in the main, been obliged to surrender. On every captured building and in every street along the line of battle, the Polish national flags were hoisted.

The German report of the outbreak of the rising, given on September 2 by D.N.B underlined :

. . . " This rising has for a long time been systematically prepared by those forces who hide behind the covering name of ' New Polish Army.' The instigators have been able to catch a not inconsiderable part of Polish youth for this Army. It formed a comparatively small nucleus, which was, however, strictly organised and very well trained and which was able to maintain complete secrecy even towards the Polish population. Groups

* *Bór* translated literally means "old forest." It was the pseudonym chosen by General Komorowski, the Commander of a Brigade in 1939, and Commander of the Home Army from 1943, after his predecessor had been captured by the Germans.

and sections of these insurgents to the number of from five to twenty men, were garrisoned in private houses

" The rising broke out in the same time all over Warsaw. An hour beforehand, groups of insurgents forced their way into private houses and manned windows and skylights from which they were able to fire on army and police patrols. From these houses, which had long been selected for this purpose, they provided fierce covering fire, sealing off their own districts without the slightest consideration for the civilian population. They did not even consider the lives of the sick, of mothers or children . . . The more important firing positions were manned by snipers, who were armed with telescopic rifles They were able to blockade the Warsaw garrison, and to surprise and disarm single sentries. Every large house was a fortress which could only be got at with difficulty "

On August 3, the Warsaw insurgents had every reason for optimism, and it was to be expected that in a short space of time the Germans would be compelled to quit the capital But the Russians suddenly stopped their advance and a few days later were temporarily repulsed from Warsaw and retired thirty miles.

When General Bór, the Commander of the Home Army, began the rising on August 1st, he had 50,000 soldiers gathered in the capital—20,000 of them were armed, and 30,000 were waiting for the weapons they hoped to take from the Germans. At least 30 per cent. of the weapons arming this force had been manufactured by the Underground, 30 per cent. had come from British supplies, and another 30 per cent. was booty taken from the Germans, while the remaining 10 per cent. consisted of arms which had been hidden since 1939.

On August 4, as the stocks of ammunition neared exhaustion, the character of the battle began to change and the possibility of further attack on the part of the Poles ceased to exist. The great city with its population of over 1,300,000, erected hundreds of barricades and the fight was waged from house to house, from street to street. Warsaw, subjected by the Luftwaffe to an unceasing bombardment (German aircraft flew at roof-top height), and battered by scores of heavy artillery and mortars (27 ins. included), answered with the scanty weapons of its defenders. The Germans, " using columns of civilians, women and children as screens for their tanks," slowly began to gain the advantage

From August 4, General Bór sent out appeals to the Allies requesting " categorically for immediate assistance in ammunition and anti-tank weapons." On August 2, Churchill assured the House of Commons that the " Russian armies (who) now stand before the gates of Warsaw, bring the liberatior of Poland in their hands . . . (they) offer freedom, sovereignty and independence to the Poles."

Was this Army in truth " bringing in their hands freedom, liberation and independence to the Poles? " It was a remarkable situation, the Poles in Warsaw were fighting just before the eyes of this army and re-

questing their help — nothing would have seemed more natural and simple, therefore, than for them to have stretched out their hands with this 'freedom, liberation and independence' and first of all help to liberate the Polish capital, yet . .

" Since the beginning of the struggle for Warsaw, the Red Army on its outskirts had discontinued all active operations," wired the Vice-Premier on August 5 from Warsaw. " Complete quiet now reigns, although for the second day the German planes are heavily bombing the city. In a word—there is no Soviet intervention This incomprehensible passive behaviour on the part of Russian forces standing only a dozen or so kilometres from Warsaw has its political significance . . "

On August 6, General Bór reported that the "Soviet attack on the eastern outskirts of Warsaw died down three days ago . . " and on August 8, his communique ran :—"All is quiet on the East, we no longer hear the Russian guns . . . I solemnly state that Warsaw in its fighting is not receiving assistance from abroad, from the Allies, just as Poland did not receive it in 1939. Our alliance with Great Britain has resulted only in bringing our assistance to her in 1940, in repulsing the German attack against the British Isles, in the fight in Norway, Africa, Italy and on the Western front. We request you to state this fact to the British in an official demarche It should remain as a document . . We do not ask for equipment—we demand its immediate despatch."

" The soldiers and the population of the capital look in vain to the skies expecting Allied help," wired the Government Delegate on August 10 " They only see German aircraft against a background of German smoke "

It cannot be denied that from the very first days of the Warsaw rising, London bargained with Moscow over the help which was to be given to the Polish capital Moscow's point-blank refusal to help did not astonish the fighting Poles, for they had already learnt that detachments of the Polish Home Army had been disarmed by the Russians within that area from the frontier to the Vistula. Why, therefore, should the Soviet Government supply Warsaw with weapons? But what the people of Warsaw found difficult to understand was this silence and lack of support from Britain and the United States. London explained that Warsaw could not receive support from the West as, strategically, the Eastern Front belonged to Russia and neither they, nor the United States, wished to interfere in the Russian theatre of operations. Warsaw radio expressed the sentiments of the Polish people in this their most poignant hour, by recalling America's commitments in the Atlantic Charter, and Britain's Treaty with Poland " The African, Norwegian, Italian and French fronts, the Atlantic and British home front, where our land, sea and air troops are fighting " claimed the broadcast, " were and are not the terrain of Polish strategical interest but the terrain of a commonly conducted war. We, therefore, demand reciprocity." The only conclusion which could be drawn from the previous events was that in the early days of the rising, London dared not go against Moscow and give aid to Warsaw. World opinion, however, was to exert too great a pressure for the continuance of

such an attitude, and at length the British Government began to give a certain limited measure of supplies.*

It seemed that Moscow also experienced a little uneasiness under the barrage of the World Press which published the news that the Soviet Government had quite simply refused to help Warsaw. For her defence, Moscow stated that she " had not been informed " of the intentions of the Polish Home Army and pointed out the " impossibility " of helping the insurgents, since " they were only occupying isolated buildings and any supplies dropped would not benefit them but the Germans." A statement which was to be proved incorrect when General Bór, in his communiqué on August 13, declared that . " . . owing to British supplies dropped in the course of the night, (we) were able to make an offensive action, aimed at engaging some of the enemy units attacking the Old Town." Regarding Moscow's argument, the Polish Government, in a statement on August 31, quoted facts which proved that the Kremlin had been fully informed at the time.

" On July 31, on the eve of the outbreak of the rising in Warsaw, the Polish Prime Minister informed M. Molotov, during their first conversation in the Kremlin, that this action was to be expected soon. On August 2, the British authorities forwarded to Moscow a telegram from General Bór, dated August 1, in which he said : 'As the struggle for Warsaw has begun, I ask you to bring about immediate assistance from the Soviet side by means of an immediate thrust from the outside '

" On August 2, M. Mikolajczyk personally approached Marshal Stalin with the request that assistance should be given to fighting Warsaw and obtained definite promises from him that Soviet liaison officers were to be sent to the city.

" On August 5, the Soviet Captain Kalugin, who arrived in Warsaw and approached the Polish Command, sent, through that Command, a telegram to his headquarters which was transmitted to Moscow to Marshal Stalin.

' . *I am in personal contact with the Command of the Warsaw garrison, who is leading the heroic partisan fight of the nation against the Hitlerite bandits. After acquainting myself with the general military situation, I came to the conclusion that, in spite of the heroism of the Army and the entire Warsaw population, there are still needs which, if made good, would permit a speedier victory over a common foe (the specification of arms and ammunition followed). The German Air Force is destroying the city and killing the civilians The heroic population of Warsaw trusts that, in a few hours' time you will give them armed support.*'

" This telegram was forwarded to Moscow through the British authorities on August 8. On August 9, the British again forwarded to Moscow a telegram from Commander of the Home Army addressed to Marshal Rokossovsky. This telegram suggested co-ordinated action and asked for help for Warsaw.

" On August 10 a cable was sent to Moscow, through the British military mission there, giving a list of the places suggested for the dropping of arms

* *Glasgow Herald*, August 10, quoted the message of the "Scottish Committee for Polish Freedom" sent to Churchill and Eden —"We have learned with regret of the refusal of the British and Russian Governments to provide them (the Poles in Warsaw) with food and ammunition "

and munitions and a list of targets for the Soviet Air Force round Warsaw On August 12 and 16 additional information, even more detailed, was sent again through British official channels to Moscow "

None of these telegrams were to receive an acknowledgment, not even the ones sent by Captain Kalugin, who remained in Warsaw for six weeks.

On August 10, Moscow, in an ambiguously worded broadcast, stated that the " Red Army and the Polish Forces (meaning those from the U.S.S R.) are attacking vigorously and soon the white-red Polish flags will appear on the walls of Warsaw. Therefore, the action of the reactionary Polish landowners in London who are endeavouring to weaken the activities of the Red Army and the Polish Forces, must be condemned the more "

On August 13 Moscow passed over to an open attack on the Polish Government and *Tass* issued the following statement :—

" Recently reports appeared in the foreign Press emanating from Polish radio and Press about a revolt begun in Warsaw on August 1, by order of the Polish emigres in London. The Polish Press and radio of the emigre Government in London state that the people revolting in Warsaw are in contact with the Soviet Command and that the latter is not sending them any help.

" The Soviet News Agency has authority to state that the statements of the foreign Press are either the result of a misunderstanding or a libel on the Soviet High Command *Tass* is in possession of information that the London Poles, in quarters responsible for the Warsaw uprising, made no attempt to co-ordinate the result with the Soviet High Command The responsibility for the Warsaw happenings thus lies entirely with the Polish emigré quarters in London "

This was the first official voice of the Soviet Government on the Warsaw rising Here was no announcement of help for the struggling city, but accusations levelled against the ' guilty Polish emigrés in London,' accusations of causing a ' rising ' And from that moment Soviet propaganda followed up the theme that the " semi-fascist Polish Government in London, for reasons of prestige, prematurely gave the command for a rising in order to involve Moscow in it, politically and militarily "*

" The reactionary gang of Sosnkowski and Raczkiewicz," broadcast the spokesman of the ' Union of Polish Patriots,' from Moscow on August 23, " intended to make a political business of the blood being shed in Warsaw in order to show they have influence in Poland Sosnkowski and company deliberately failed to come to an agreement with the Soviet Government and did not inform the American and British Governments of their intentions Sosnkowski, Bór, and their civilian advisors in Poland and abroad, had only one aim—to worsen Polish-Soviet relations . "

The Soviet Press enlarged on this topic, and *Krasny Flot* (Red Fleet) on the 25th August, for instance, emphasised that the " criminal act of the Polish emigré instigators who had thrown the poorly armed groups of insurgents into the battle of Warsaw, had been exposed by public opinion " In addition to which statement, *Krasny Flot* went on to name General

* The *Daily Worker* and *News Chronicle*, August 13, 1944

Anders, in spite of his being in active command of the Polish troops fighting in Italy at the time " as being censured by England, along with Sosnkowski and collaborators on the above charge."

Anders was also charged with being in league with the Gestapo, through connections with supposed " collaborators in Poland " *Krasnaya Zwiezda* (Red Star) published a cartoon depicting General Sosnkowski and General Anders washing their hands in a bowl of blood over a table covered with the map of Warsaw

" There has never been such an example of internal insurrection in any city along the Red Army's whole line of advance," wrote *Pravda* on August 19, and, going on to criticise the leadership of the rising, said that the Red Army had always warned people against such insurrections. The Soviet Press accused " irresponsible leaders " in Warsaw, who should have waited " until the Russian forces had advanced in strength beyond the Vistula." But the town of Warsaw lies on both sides of the river .

The climax of this Soviet campaign to justify the inactivity of Russia in giving supplies and support to the rising in Warsaw, was reached when the Kremlin, through Zymierski, issued a threat to court-martial and punish General Bór and the leaders of Warsaw rising, who were labelled as ' guilty men.' This threat was issued when the German bombers, guns, mortars and flame-throwers were already pounding the capital into a heap of burning rubble amidst which the inhabitants fought on in defence of the ' Polish right to independence.' In an English transmission of August 24, the Warsaw radio commented .—"An unanswered question arises Why are we not given help by those who could give it easily, and adequately? Why were not the Poles helped by an army standing only ten miles away? "

On the same day, the *Glasgow Herald*, as representative of the Scottish Press, wrote that the " Polish Committee of National Liberation (in Lublin) preferred to see their political opponents exterminated by the Germans instead of coming to their rescue "* The Scottish newspaper seemed to have taken the existence of this ' Committee ' in earnest, as if it indeed held the power to with-hold or give help to Warsaw.

It was obvious that the situation would have been easier for the Kremlin if the Red Army could occupy the ruins of the Polish capital and if the Council of National Unity, the Vice-Premier and the bulk of the Home Army, were already liquidated by the Germans. The Russian puppet Government could then be set up without hindrance

On August 10, the German planes dropped leaflets containing an ultimatum, calling upon the population to leave the city carrying white handkerchiefs and make for the west. " Those who allow themselves to be

* *Osservatore Romana*, at the commencement of the rising, had expressed the same views, writing that "the Russians had deliberately stopped their offensive at the gates of Warsaw "

exploited as tools of the Bolsheviks," ran the ultimatum, " will be made to bear the consequences without further scruples "

There was no answer to this ultimatum. The Germans, in the meantime, continued to burn the houses and shoot hundreds of people in their advance, and succeeded in piercing a road through the defences to one of the bridges. About 100,000 people were evicted from the districts as the Germans gained ground and they were herded into a converted concentration camp at Pruszków, some ten miles west of the capital and left under desperate conditions to starve. It was not until September 7, after frequent appeals and demands from " fighting and bleeding Warsaw," that the International Red Cross managed to supply the Pruszków camp with food.

On August 8, three Polish crews from Italy were permitted to drop the first containers of supplies on the Polish capital. On the night of the 13th, the first planes to be dispatched from air-bases in that same country appeared in the skies over Warsaw. Four days later Allied Headquarters, Italy, announced that more than one hundred aircraft had been sent out to drop supplies and ammunition. " The Polish, British and South African crews of Liberators and Halifaxes employed in this task have had to make a round trip of 1,750 miles through areas strongly defended by German fighters . . . Twenty-one bombers are missing " Washington approached the Kremlin with a proposal to develop a shuttle-service for their planes carrying supplies for Warsaw (London, it seemed, did not ask), but the Soviet Government would not agree, although for several months Allied aircraft from Italy had been using airfields on Russian territory to bomb targets in South-Eastern Europe, Poland and East Prussia. In spite of their refusal to allow Allied aircraft carrying supplies for Warsaw to use their airfields, several of the planes, damaged in their mission, had to make a forced landing behind the Soviet lines.* Fifteen per cent. of British supplies fell into the hands of the Home Army—the amount was insignificant to the need and was more symbolic than anything else. From August 15, only Poles from a bomber squadron in Italy were permitted to bring help to Warsaw. And they continued to do so until the last crew perished . . .

The great distance and the ' high losses ' were put forward as the reasons for the cessation of the British attempts to drop supplies, although

* The Swedish radio gave the information that those crews had apparently been interned by the Russians (?) There was, however, no confirmation of this news as there had been in the case of the internment by the Soviets of the American airmen who, after having bombed Japan, landed on Russian territory.

It was not the bombers' first flight to Poland from Britain and Italy. The first American planes to undertake bombing operations in that area had landed in Soviet-occupied territory on June 2, and up to August 8, the U.S A A.F., Eastern Command, mentioned twenty operations in which its bases in Russia had been used.

a few weeks previously the " strong forces of American planes had flown over Warsaw in daylight without losing a single one."

Such were the formal reasons given in August for the ceasing of any aid for the Polish capital. Fighting and dying by the thousands, under the overwhelming supremacy of German artillery and air bombardment, the people of Warsaw could find nothing to say.

" Half of our men," said the spokesman on the Warsaw radio on August 24, " are unarmed, cannot they be supplied with weapons ? We understand there are difficulties regarding transport, but cannot these be overcome ? But what of these obstacles ? How was it that the Polish squadrons, who had formed twenty-five per cent of the British Bomber Command in 1941, could operate with the R.A F , that Polish pilots could fight over London, but were forbidden to fight over Warsaw or carry supplies to their capital ? "

The British Government evidently did not achieve any success in its attempt to gain the co-operation of the Soviets and organise some help for the Polish capital. Moscow's attitude was that Warsaw should be punished. And the Allies had no wish to go against the intentions of Moscow in this instance. It proved to be the unique occasion when Churchill's reiterated formula that Britain was helping everyone in their fight against the ' Hun ' was not applied. Thus Warsaw was condemned to death before the eyes of the Soviet Armies of ' liberation,' and in spite of the immense air armada of the Allies.

On August 28, the first Russian plane which appeared in the sky over Warsaw dropped leaflets . . calling on the Germans to surrender.

An incisive picture of the battle in the Polish capital was given in the *Times* on August 30. The description came from . . . a British airman (Lt. John Ward, of Birmingham) who escaped from German hands many months ago and had since been living in Underground Poland .—

" It is a battle which is carried on as much by civil population as by troops of the Home Army

" Warsaw to-day is in a state of total warfare. Almost every street in the city has been a field of battle for the past 24 days. The enemy mine-throwers, artillery, and aircraft are taking a heavy toll of human life, the damage of property is incalculable. Practically the whole population is engaged in some sort of public duty Thousands of people have been mobilised to put out the fires raging in many parts by day and night Thousands more are engaged in clearing debris from the streets which are in the hands of the Home Army Others are acting as couriers, field telephone workers, and in the Red Cross . . .

" The actual army—that is to say, the Home Army—is a queer mixture. Fighting in it are young boys of 16 years and old men of 70 years. Few have regular weapons to carry. They range from small automatic pistols to rifles. There are also some few heavy machine-guns, but these are only used in emergency, as they need too much ammunition. Former colonels are fighting as soldiers under the command of young lieutenants.

" Weapons are being improvised. Hand grenades have been made from old gas pipes filled with some explosive mixture. These grenades are lit with an ordinary match before being thrown Flame-throwers are in use

that have been made in small workshops. The weapons dropped by the R.A.F. have been of great value, but are inadequate in quantity

"Food is a great problem. Warsaw has been starved by the Germans for nearly five years. The quantity of food in the city at the outbreak of hostilities was small. It is already 24 days since hostilities began and at the moment we see no hope of a speedy end to the present state of affairs.

("The population have a second great worry. What form will the Russian occupation take? News comes every day that more leading members of the community are being arrested in territories occupied by Soviet troops. Also a large number of officers from the Home Army have been put into Soviet concentration camps. Throughout the war the Polish people have had little sympathy with the Russian cause, now they have none. It was understood by the Polish people when the uprising started, that it was only a question of a few days before the Soviet troops entered the city.")

The chapter in brackets was omitted by *The Times*.

In the midst of these events came September 1st, and the fifth anniversary of the Second Great War was reached. The British Prime Minister broadcast on that day praising the "Polish armies who have won and are still winning renown, fighting on all the main fronts in the great final battle which will liberate Europe and make possible the restoration of a strong and independent Poland." He added briefly, "in Warsaw the heroic struggle continues, watched attentively by the world."

On the same day Warsaw, celebrating the anniversary behind barricades, amid fire and ruins, sent an appeal to the Polish forces fighting abroad:—

"We are alone!" the radio station *Blyskawica* (Lightning) broadcast in helpless despair.

"Airmen remember! Warsaw needs only five tons of ammunition daily to enable her to continue her fight.

"Sailors, escorting convoys to Russia, remember Warsaw needs five tons of ammunition daily.

"Soldiers, remember the soldiers of the Home Army in Warsaw need five tons of ammunition daily.

"Parachutists, to whom not so long ago we gave a flag, remember we have already waited a month for you."

Warsaw was pleading for five tons of ammunition, yet at the same time, the French, Yugoslav, Italian and every other resistance movement in Europe, were being supplied with thousands of tons. Hitler's erstwhile satellite countries received more consideration than the Poles in Warsaw. Rumania, for an example, was supported by five hundred Allied aircraft, who bombed targets indicated by its troops on the second day after it had quitted the camp of the Axis.

With each succeeding day the Polish Government begged the Allied Governments to grant aid to a dying Warsaw, and, through London, approached the Soviet Government continuously with the same pleas, but as the Big Three had already reached some agreement as to the sphere of their political and military activity in Europe, and Moscow evidently did not wish to change it or allow her other partners to interfere in her zone, the Polish capital . . . had to wait. On September 1, another

Polish voice made itself heard above the stream of talk and counter-talk—General Sosnkowski (the Polish Commander-in-Chief and first Allied General to gain a victory in this war against the German forces) issued an Order of the Day to the Home Army, in which, with the despair of one who looked on, helplessly, at the slaughter of his soldiers, he presented the world with the tragic reality of the Warsaw situation. If this Order of the Day was intended to awake the conscience of the peoples of the world and force the issue by compelling the Big Three, still engaged on their bargaining, to react at last either in a friendly or in a hostile manner, then its author, to a certain extent, seemed to achieve his purpose.

" Soldiers of the Home Army ! Five years have passed since the day when Poland, encouraged by the British Government and having received its guarantees, stood up to a lonely struggle against the German might. The September campaign gave the Allies eight months of invaluable time, enabling Great Britain to complete her war preparations to such an extent that the Battle of Britain—a turning point in history—was won. History has still to pass the verdict on the significance of the Polish September campaign in the destinies of the world

" Since then the deadly struggle of the Polish Armed Forces against German imperialism has never ceased The darkness of enslavement had barely time to enshroud the ruins of Polish towns and villages, when Polish forces were already re-forming abroad For five years they have been fighting without respite on the oceans and continents, in defence of the liberty of the nation—believing that they were thus following the road leading to the restoration of their country, undiminished and truly independent. In Poland, the initial organisation of the Underground Army had already started in October, 1939. The story of its development, of its battles and strife, is a proof of what can be achieved by setting into motion the purest aspiration of the human soul. Soldiers of the Polish Armed Forces abroad, successful in the battles of London and of the Atlantic, of Rome and of Paris, look up to the example set by their brothers at home as a spiritual beacon, ceding to them the first place in the annals of achievements of soldierly devotion to duty.

" For a whole month the soldiers of the Home Army, together with the people of Warsaw, have been shedding their blood alone behind street barricades in a merciless struggle against the enemy's overwhelming superiority The loneliness in which the Poles fought the September Campaign, and the loneliness in which they are now fighting in Warsaw are entirely different one from the other The people of Warsaw, left to their own devices and abandoned on the common battle front against the Germans—this is a tragic and ghastly riddle which we Poles are unable to solve, considering the background of the great strength of the Allies on the threshold of the sixth year of war

" We are unable to do so, because we have not yet lost faith in the belief that the world is still governed by moral rights. We do not understand, as we are unable to believe that a policy, devoid of moral principles, could do otherwise than write on the pages of history, for her own condemnation, the ominous words . ' Mane, Tekel, Fares ! ' We cannot believe that reasons of expediency in the face of physical might, could lead so far as to cause indifference to the agony of the capital of a country whose soldiers have shielded so many other capitals with their own bodies, besides lending aid in their liberation.

" Experts endeavour to explain to us that the lack of help for Warsaw is due to difficulties of a technical nature. Calculation of loss and profit are put forward The loss of twenty-seven aircraft over Warsaw in the space of one month means little to the Allied Air Forces, which possess several score of thousands of planes of all kinds and types at their disposal. If figures have to be mentioned, let us recall that, during the battle of London, Polish airmen suffered losses amounting to over forty per cent. In the efforts to aid Warsaw, the losses in aircraft and crews have been fifteen per cent.

" For the past five years the Home Army has been fighting against the Germans without respite, in conditions so appalling that they surpass the limits of comprehension by the western world and will only be adequately understood and appreciated in the future The Home Army does not pause to count its wounds, its sacrifices and its graves.

" The Home Army is the only military force in Poland which can be taken into account. The balance-sheet of its battles, its achievements and victories is crystal clear. That is the truth which has been long concealed lest somewhere, someone, strong and powerful, should frown in anger. This truth is, nevertheless, finding its way to the surface, and no artful hand is now able to conceal the light thrown by the burning city of Warsaw.

" Warsaw is waiting—not for empty words of praise, not for approval, not for assurances of pity and sympathy. She is waiting for arms and ammunition She does not ask in the manner of a poor relative, for crumbs from the lordly table, she demands the means to fight—in the knowledge of the provisions of the Alliance and the obligations contained therein.

" Warsaw is fighting and waiting. The soldiers of the Home Army, the workmen and intellectuals, girls and children—all. The whole Nation is fighting, having, in its passionate yearning for the truth, liberty and victory, achieved the miracle of complete unity

" If the population of Warsaw were to perish for the lack of adequate aid under the ruins of its houses—if it were to be abandoned to mass slaughter through passivity, indifference or cold calculation—then the world's conscience would be burdened with a frightful wrong, a wrong unprecedented in history There are qualms of conscience which kill

" Your heroic Commander is accused of a lack of foresight in not having anticipated a sudden halt of the Soviet offensive at the gates of Warsaw. No other tribunal but that of history will pass judgment on this question. We are confident of the ultimate sentence Reproach is made to the Poles for their alleged lack of co-ordination, in their fight, with the general operational plans in Eastern Europe. If needed, we will prove how many of our endeavours to achieve such co-ordination were in vain For five years the Home Army has been systematically accused of passivity and of feigning combat against the Germans. To-day, it is being accused of fighting too much and too well. Every Polish soldier could well repeat to himself the line of Wyspianski's poem :

" vileness, lies,
I know them, know them only too well."

" We are continuing in our efforts here to find assistance for you We are still receiving promises. We believe in them and we are confident that this faith will not be taken away from the Polish Armed Forces—particularly on the eve of victory and of the triumph of the Allies common cause

" I wish to give you an assurance in the name of your brothers who are fighting now on all the fronts in the world, that their deepest concern and their loving thoughts accompany you faithfully in your stern and glorious battle. May this knowledge aid to alleviate, however slightly, the burden

you are carrying and to assist you in bearing these days of anguish which resemble a nightmare. But first and foremost, know that no sacrifice, conceived from a clear heart, can be vain, and that your strife is rendering the Polish cause great and indisputable services."

The bitterness underlying Sosnkowski's Order of the Day augmented the already existing uneasiness in Britain The English Press had ignored the rising in Warsaw during its early days,* and out of all the London newspapers, it was the *Evening Standard* who stressed on August 9 that the defenders of the Polish capital were appealing to the British for help :—

" They say that this is not 1939. Britain has thousands of day and night bombers that in a single mission could change the situation by attacking the Germans and dropping supplies They point to the Polish paratroops fighting fit and ready in this country. They point to the pledge of 1939."†

On August 14, Lord Vansittart wrote to the Editor of the *Daily Mail* :—

"A tragedy is being enacted before an insufficiently attentive world. The British and Russians stimulated the Polish patriots to revolt in order to assist the oncoming Russian Army. The Poles did so ; then the Russian advance was halted . . . The unsupported Poles are being slaughtered and Warsaw is being obliterated . . . Is humanity going to allow this tragedy to be consummated ? "

" The British Press," wrote London's correspondent of *Socialdemokraten* in Stockholm, " acting like a man in a fever, tried to explain the

* On August 8th, wrote Z Litynski in his *Warsaw Warning*, London, 1944 "I rang up a friend of mine, Mrs H., the feature editor of one of the biggest London dailies, telling her how amazed I was that so great a story as that of fighting Warsaw had found no echo in the British Press I suggested to her that I should at once write an account for her paper, based on the information given me by the Polish Chief of Staff, or, rather, to make accessible to one of their correspondents the messages received by the Poles from Warsaw My friend replied that it was a matter of importance and would have to be discussed with the Editor. Next afternoon, she phoned and apologised She was very sorry indeed but, in the present circumstances, her paper could not publish a story about Warsaw fighting a death struggle against the Germans ."

† The Polish Commander-in-Chief was informed that these paratroops were already under the command of General Eisenhower, who in turn could not give permission to go to the aid of Warsaw, without orders from the Allied Governments The Polish paratroops and air crews demonstrated on the airfields and demanded to be allowed to fly to the help of Warsaw They were finally persuaded that the problem would be solved and so forth These Polish paratroops were soon afterwards to take part in the Anglo-American Air-borne Army landing in Holland in the September During the same period the Polish fighter squadrons played their part in hunting the flying bombs launched against England and according to the Air Ministry's communique of September 9th, shot down twelve per cent. of the total.

On August 12th the *Economist* wrote on this topic : " But there are in this country Polish Squadrons in the R A F. and units of Polish parachutists which have been trained precisely for such tasks as assisting a rising inside Poland. Those forces are now serving under Allied operational command Why then have Polish airmen and parachutists not been detailed to help the insurgents in Warsaw ? True, Warsaw has now come within the sphere of the Russian Supreme Command But that surely does not mean that the Polish Government, recognised by Great Britain and the United States, ought to be denied the chance of sending Polish forces to aid their fighting countrymen. Or are the Poles, perhaps to lose the right to struggle on their own soil for their own liberation ?"

actions of the Russians and their own Government, but facts are facts, and they stand out clearly." * Warsaw was fighting for her life and neither the British nor the Russians were helping her. Appeals were made throughout the world by the hundred Scotland was the first to support Warsaw's cause, then came the American and British Trade Union Federations. Later the Premiers of South Africa, New Zealand and Australia, raised their voices in the British Commonwealth, to be joined by millions of individuals The British Government saw the need to place matters before the public The *Times* published a résumé of the endeavours of the British Government and their attempts to help Warsaw. The statement made a still deeper impression on the public when it became clear that the losses reported in the R.A F were a direct result of the Russian refusal to allow their air bases to be used for these operations.†

*In the *Tribune* (September 1st), G Orwell, gave the following caustic comment on the attitude of the British Left-wing press over the rising in Warsaw, but omitted to include that section of the Conservatives who, led by *The Times* adopted the same attitude

"I want to protest," wrote Orwell, "against the mean and cowardly attitude adopted by the British press towards the recent rising in Warsaw

"As soon as the news of the rising broke, the *News Chronicle* and kindred papers adopted a markedly disapproving attitude One was left with the general impression that the Poles deserved to have their bottoms smacked for doing what all the Allied wirelesses had been urging them to do for years past, and that they would not be given and did not deserve to be given any help from outside A few papers tentatively suggested that arms and supplies might be dropped by the Anglo-Americans, a thousand miles away; no one, so far as I know, suggested that this might be done by the Russians, perhaps twenty miles away. The *New Statesman*, in its issue of August 18th, even went so far as to doubt whether appreciable help could be given from the air in such circumstances All or nearly all the papers of the Left were full of blame for the '*emigre*' London Government which had 'prematurely' ordered its followers to rise when the Red Army was at the gates .

"I cannot discuss here why it is that the British intelligentsia, with few exceptions, have developed a nationalistic loyalty towards the U.S S R., and are dishonestly uncritical of its policies . But I would like to close with two considerations which are worth thinking over

"First of all, a message to English Left-wing journalists and intellectuals generally. Do remember that dishonesty and cowardice always have to be paid for. Don't imagine that for years on end you can make yourself the boot-licking propagandist of the Soviet regime, or any other regime, and then suddenly return to mental decency. Once a whore, always a whore.

"Secondly, a wider consideration Nothing is more important in the world to-day than Anglo-Russian friendship and co-operation, and that will not be attained without plain speaking. The best way to come to an agreement with a foreign nation is *not* to refrain from criticising its policies, even to the extent of leaving your own people in the dark about them At present, so slavish is the attitude of nearly the whole British Press that ordinary people have very little idea of what is happening, and may well be committed to policies which they will repudiate in five years' time"

† Even that pro-Soviet paper, the *News Chronicle*, had been unable to restrain from criticism of the Soviets' attitude and on September 10 wrote

"As for the failure of the Russians to co-operate in sending supplies to the Polish insurgents inside Warsaw, it was an ungenerous attitude which is not understood here"

The remark of the British Prime Minister that " the Allies would welcome any general rally or fusion of both the Polish Forces, those who are working with the Western Powers and those who are working with the Soviet Union," could only have referred to the Western Powers, for the leaders of the Soviet Union had an entirely different conception of such a ' rally or fusion.' From the very first the Soviets had demanded the complete subordination of the Polish forces. Since they were unable to dominate the Polish Army created under General Anders in the U S S R, the Kremlin had compelled this Army to quit Russia and had then formed their own quasi-Polish troops, and instituted a campaign to disintegrate the Polish Army in Britain. With the Red Army's approach to Poland, the Soviets endeavoured to bring about the subordination of the still independent Home Army and the Underground Authorities The violent campaign conducted by the Kremlin in the winter of 1943-44, has already been described, how pressure was brought to bear on the Polish Government by the Allies regarding this matter, and how the Polish people finally decided to contact the Red Army, not as foes but willing to help them as " an Ally of their Allies." Moscow answered this trust put in her by exterminating all independent Polish troops the Red Army encountered on its road. The Soviet Polish forces formed in the U.S S R were to replace the Polish Home Army.

The Polish detachments gradually revealed themselves and struck at the rear of the Germans. At first they were welcomed by the Commanders of the Red troops, who promised help, arms and supplies.

" But at the same time they embarked upon a propaganda campaign which urged these Polish soldiers to murder their officers who were labelled as Fascists and German agents," reported the Government's Delegate from Warsaw " Immediately after the cessation of hostilities on the sector of the front concerned, the attitude of the Soviet authorities changed The Polish Commanders with their staffs and front-line officers were arrested and their soldiers forcibly disarmed and segregated All those privates who would not agree to join the Red Army or Berling's Army were sent to some distant concentration camps "

With the renewal of the Soviet offensive in the North, in the provinces of Wilno and Nowogródek, a wave of reprisals followed the advance of the Red Army. In Wilno, units of the Polish Home Army had attacked during the night of July 6, and driven the Germans from a large part of the town, twelve hours before the Russians moved into the city. The same action was repeated in Lwów In both those capitals of Eastern Poland, units of the Home Army, together with all the population, women and children, had participated in violent street fighting.

In Wilno the Soviet authorities arrested the Polish commanding officers on July 17 ; in Nowogródek the officers were arrested on the 19th of the same month, while the men were disarmed. In Lwów, every officer of

the Underground Army had been summoned to a special meeting and, on arrival, immediately subjected to the same treatment. Units of the Home Army which had struck at the Germans in Kock and Lubartów near Lublin and occupied those two towns, suffered a similar fate on the entry of the Red troops

" From July 27 onwards," ran the communiqué of the Government's Delegate in Warsaw, " the Soviet authorities commenced disarming every detachment of the Underground Army which, having fought the Germans in Lublin and its neighbourhood, had come into the open and tried to co-operate in a friendly manner with the Red Army. Some officers and men were arrested and transferred to Majdanek, the notorious concentration camp set up by the Germans for the specific purpose of exterminating Jews. The staffs of the 8th and 9th Infantry Divisions of the Home Army with General Halka, as well as some 200 officers and N.C.O.s, together with 2,500 men, have already been sent there. The District Commandèr of the Home Army, Edward, and the head of the local Underground Administration, Cholewa, have been interned.

" In the region of Sandomierz and in the other Polish territories west of the so-called Curzon Line, the disarming of the Polish Home Forces is being methodically pursued.

" On August 17 in Tarnopol, all men between the ages of 18—50 have been deported by the Soviet authorities.

" On August 20, at Tomaszów, in the province of Lublin, the Soviet authorities have arrested and deported to an unknown destination, the head of the local Underground Administration and his staff. Conscription for Berling's Army is being carried out under compulsion.

" On August 21, in Biala Podlaska, the Soviet authorities have arrested and deported the Commander of the 34th Infantry Regiment of the Home Army. The Mayor of the town, Kowalewski, and the district Commander of the Home Army have also been arrested. All the orders of the ' Polish Committee of National Liberation ' are executed by the N.K.V.D. (the Soviet political police). Mobilisation for the Soviet Army is being carried out on a large scale."*

Mobilisation was announced in the area of Poland freed from German occupation by the medium of leaflets printed in two languages—Polish and Russian—and signed by Marshal Rokossovsky and members of his military Council of the Byelorussian Front, Generals Bulganin and Telegin. The leaflets stated that the " right of mobilising those under obligation to perform military duties, is solely that of the Polish Committee of National Liberation (Lublin Committee) . . and on the instructions of the ' Committee ' the Command of the Red Army may also carry out such mobilisation "

* "The Scottish Committee for Polish Freedom" published the text of this information in full in a pamphlet entitled "The Soviet Communists in Poland" September, 1944

When the first of these leaflets were brought to Warsaw, it was thought to be yet another trick of German psychological warfare. The Commander of the Home Army, General Bór, informed Marshal Rokossovsky via London of this seeming German provocation—he received no answer, for the Red Army had, in fact, carried out this mobilisation on the territory of the Polish Republic.

By this method the 'rallying or fusion' of the Soviet 'Polish' Army (which Churchill had appealed for in his speech) with the troops of the Polish Republic was effectively accomplished. The latter were simply destroyed as a body; the Kremlin had no intention of allowing any troops not entirely subordinated to its control to have a separate existence on the territory occupied by the Red Army As this army advanced into Poland, so the police of the N.K.V.D. undertook wholesale arrests of the leading members of the Underground, both east and west of the 'Curzon Line.' Warsaw called upon the Polish Government to inform the Governments of Britain and the United States of these activities and to appeal to them to take the disarmed and arrested men under their protection. On August 23, the Government Delegate and Chairman of the 'Council of National Unity,' wired to President Roosevelt and Churchill from the Polish capital.—

"We address ourselves to you a second time. It is now three weeks that we have been waging a bloody struggle, abandoned utterly to our own resources, without adequate reinforcements of arms and ammunition, without air aid. During this same period reports from all the areas of Poland under Soviet occupation, whether those areas affect the present situation or not, state that the Soviets are interning, arresting or putting into the notorious Majdanek concentration camp, members of the civil administration and Home Army who have come into the open, the Home Army which had helped so outstandingly in fighting the Germans Thus, after five years of incessant bloody resistance to the Germans, the Polish nation is coming under a no less cruel slavery, this time to one of the Allies. Can the great nations of the United States of North America and of Great Britain look on passively at this new hecatomb of their ally Poland? Is it not allowed even to use the Polish Air Force for the rescue of perishing Warsaw? Is Poland to fall a victim to a division of spheres of interests? We solemnly declare that we are fighting for Independence on the ruins of flaming Warsaw and will go on fighting for it, and will continue to defend it against every aggressor. The apathy of our great Allies towards the fate of our dying city and their silent toleration of acts of violence committed under Soviet occupation are things the Polish nation can neither understand nor view with any feeling but that of bitter disillusionment."

Confronted with these facts, London and Washington, under whose pressure the Polish Government had finally been persuaded that the Home Army should co-operate with the Soviets, decided after a certain amount of delay to recognise this Army as a responsible belligerent force, entitled to treatment in accordance with all the laws and customs of war. In the Declaration issued on August 30, by the British and American Governments, it was stated that this measure had been taken in order to

protect the soldiers of the Home Army, against whom the German troops " were committing atrocities in the battle of Warsaw."

At the outbreak of the Warsaw rising, the Germans announced that the ' rebels ' in the capital would not be accorded the treatment of a fighting unit as " the General Government of Warsaw is under German authority and is considered as a part of the Reich, therefore, the Poles are rebels and can be punished for treason." Every soldier of the Home Army, therefore, who fell into German hands, was murdered on the spot. After the Anglo-American Declaration, on September 4, however, the German Foreign Office stated that: " Poles who are surrendering in Warsaw will be treated as prisoners-of-war." The Russians did not join the Allies in their Declaration and did not tender their recognition of the Home Army.

Deportations on an enormous scale were resumed by the Russians in those territories under their occupation. This ' cleaning-up ' was accomplished in a twofold manner. First of all, by the deportation of the most valuable sections of the community; during the five weeks from July 16 to August 20, ten thousand people were driven from Wilno Since under German occupation the Jews had been all but exterminated and the newcomers, the Lithuanians, had fled from Wilno back into Lithuania before the Red Army, this deportation instigated by the Soviets exclusively embraced the Polish inhabitants. In Eastern Poland, all men between 18 and 50, and women between 18 and 35, were conscripted and the Soviets began to despatch them to Russia, that is, over one-third of the total population. Secondly, in the occupied part of Central Poland, the majority of conscripts were also transported to Russia

Obviously this ' liberation ' brought about by the Red Army was bound to be viewed by the people of Warsaw in a different light from that in which the British Prime Minister chose to visualise it " They " (the Soviets), he said, " ask that there should be a Poland friendly to Russia "

The remarkable news coming from Poland (the communiqués from Warsaw received great publicity throughout the world) regarding the rising in the country concentrated particularly in the Capital, and the Soviet action in exterminating the Polish Home Army, revealed to astonished sections of the United States and British public that the United Nations were not the band of blood-brothers acting in perfect coordination, and not so united as propaganda would have them believe, and, furthermore, that the interests of Russia were not altogether in harmony with the ideas of the Western World. Over one million in the City of Warsaw were fighting desperately against the foe who had suppressed them for five years; fighting against modern armaments and in the face of an unmoved Russian Army of ' Liberation,' knowing how that same army had already dealt with their comrades-at-arms in the east of

their country. The Polish capital renowned as none other in the world for its services to the Allied cause, begged in vain for help from its two other Allies, whose air armadas " had bombed every point throughout Europe "

This Warsaw rising came as an ominous warning. With it, the curtain hiding the events taking place in Poland was drawn back, and the peoples of the world were shown not only the problem of help for the Polish capital but the problem of the future of Poland ; whether, liberated from the Nazis she was to be over-run by the Soviets ? To let this injustice stand in the way of the construction of a general system of ' peace for all time ' which would correct old injustices and forbid new ones, seemed tragic in the extreme. Was Warsaw therefore to become the crucial point of the Allied Unity ? An uneasy feeling that " Britain and the United States, were letting Poland down," spread throughout those countries.

From June 22, 1941, the British policy towards Russia had been founded on the principle that the ' Soviets can do no wrong.' This policy could do little harm during those dark years of war, when the hard-pressed Soviets were practically pushed away from the outskirts of Europe But gradually, as the Russians became victorious, so their demands upon the United Nations grew until they were beyond all sense of proportion to the war-aims proclaimed by the Allies. These demands were not confined to verbal statements only, for, as the Red Armies reached the countries west of Russia, Moscow immediately executed them by *force majeure.* Thus, along the path of victory, cleared from German pill-boxes and ' dragons' teeth,' traps were laid, one after the other, by this triumphant member of the Allied camp. The Atlantic Powers were now confronted with the dilemma, to back Poland, who had dared to stand firm, proclaiming her independence and integrity, or to recant their war-aim number one—the freedom of Poland and countenance the idea of a triumphant Russia stepping into the position now held by the Germans in Europe

In the summer of 1944, the Red Army had occupied half of Poland as far as the Vistula. The occupation was accompanied by their determination to subordinate the country to the Soviet rule, and the difference between the policy of the Kremlin and the policy of the Allies grew more and more apparent and was to increase with every passing day.

Teheran was a milestone in the history of the Second Great War. Britain and America had joined the conference, not as a bloc prepared to uphold the Atlantic Charter with all their strength, but with separate aims in view. Churchill had to manoeuvre between the United States and Russia, and between Russia and the peoples of Europe. To appease Stalin and keep the Red Army from the Balkans, from the north-eastern shores of the Mediterranean, and further east, from India, Churchill agreed to the Soviet's penetration in the Baltic countries, Czecho-Slovakia,

Rumania and Poland. It seemed, however, that this unsigned covenant was immediately forgotten by Moscow since she at once proceeded to turn every profferred inch of European territory into a captured mile, and continued with her preparations for the subordination of the rest of Europe. And, synchronising with this 'liberation' of the countries by the Red Army, came the latest Soviet instrument of domination. The 'free Committees' of different nationalities—in Moscow's opinion corresponding to London's Governments-in-exile, gradually emerged with the help of the Soviets, from their chrysalis form into puppet Governments claiming to have the full support of their respective countries. The 'Lublin Committee' was the first to appear. The Comintern was paying dividends to its founder.

After the successful invasion of Europe in the summer of 1944, the Anglo-American crusaders had dented the Siegfried Line, but Germany as yet was still unbeaten. The Germans with their back to the wall were fighting desperately War with Japan was still in its early stages Here and there Britain was beginning to clash with Russia—the revolt of the Greek sailors in Africa, which had been incited by the Soviets and suppressed by British guns, and the barely concealed rivalry over Persia for instance; but, nevertheless, the British Government was still firmly adhering to its attitude of the 'Soviets can do no wrong.' It was a simple matter for Britain, but Poland could not afford to maintain such principles when the Soviets were even then engaged in collecting the bulk of her population from the areas they had occupied and transferring it to Russia.

Britain could afford to show unlimited patience towards Russian activities, for, as yet, she had not been forced to pay for them with her flesh and blood, but only with the toil of her workers and the blood and territories of the other nations. Britain had no doubts whatsoever that when the final settlement came, she would be strong enough to enforce satisfactory peace conditions. But Poland could no longer keep pace with Britain, the methods of extermination employed by the Kremlin had been too thorough for that. There was no need for surmises, it was all too evident that, before the time for settlement of the affairs in Europe had been reached, before the Polish problem had been solved, perhaps in such a way as to allow the Poles at least to 'breathe and live,' the Polish nation would no longer exist For on the Niemen, Vistula, San and Warta, the Soviets would only have left the residue of a nation drained of all intellectuals and potential leaders, while Poland would be flooded with millions of imported Great Russians, to whom their Soviet Government intended granting Polish citizenship. It was to be this newly created Poland which would speak at the conference-table of the peace makers, just as the Soviet Ukraine of the present day, headed by Great Russians, was speaking. The problem of Poland will no longer be an international one . . . The Poland who entered the war in 1939 who although sadly

decimated, was still living until the Russians had replaced the Germans in 1944, would no longer exist

When the Red Army began their advance into Poland, the Polish people, realising their ultimate destiny, called on their Allies, Britain and the United States, for help. But America had decided to limit its interest in Europe to a 'wait and-see' attitude. Britain continued her European policy alone, and since the Polish people could no longer keep step with this policy, which entailed not only the sacrifice of their country but the death of their nation, a coolness between the British Government and Poland was bound to arise.

Not only Poland, but all the people of the Middle Zone, were turning to America and Britain as the strongest representatives of Western civilisation for the help they so sorely needed. It was a tragic situtation. The sympathy of the American and British people went out to the Poles as they were handed over to the slaughter, for the consent of Britain and America, given at Teheran, could no longer be concealed Even the British Press was now openly writing that, as regards Poland, " they agreed that she should receive compensation in the West and North for the territories lost to her in the East "*

The British Government found itself between the pressure of the public who determinedly clung on to the ideals and aims with which they had urged their Government to go to war in 1939, and the expediency of the circumstances. The British policy became one of 'shilly-shally.' London alternatively bargained, requested, even begged Moscow, and, despite rebuffs and kicks returned again and again to the question, endeavouring to find a compromise which would permit of delaying the settlement of the problem of the Middle Zone until the end of the war. The two champions of the diplomatic game, Britain and Russia, were trying hard to gain the advantage on that battlefield, but unfortunately for the Polish people, Moscow had the advantage of being on the spot, and began ruthlessly and without delay to exploit her victory to the utmost. When in the summer of 1944, the Soviets proclaimed that their own 'Committee' would function in Poland, the Kremlin once more underlined that this 'Government in exile' was synonymous with England, just as it had done in the summer of 1939 and again in 1941, and as this Government continued in its refusal to submit to the orders from Moscow, the latter preferred to talk directly with the British. London made yet another attempt to save the 'Unity of the Allies' and its standing, by persuading the Polish Government to capitulate, relinquish half its territory and agree to the farce of a 'friendly' Government But the Kremlin was in no hurry to grant concessions and demanded *plein pouvoir* in Poland. It seemed a strange spectacle, this, of a great Power compelling its weaker Ally to submit to their greater Ally, who was

* *The Times,* September 16th, 1944.

even then engaged in exterminating the Polish Underground and the Home Army, stamping them in Poland as an ' English faction ' and in their foreign propaganda as " German agents and spies."

After the silent unattended burial of the Baltic States, it was Poland who became the main objective of this diplomatic duel between Russia and Britain. The heavy losses sustained by the latter's prestige can be measured by the status of the Polish Government from July 30, 1941 At that time Moscow had no doubts as to the legality of the Polish Government, and dared not publicly claim Polish territory, Maisky, when signing the Treaty with Poland, had, at his boldest, only said that " settlement of the frontiers will be carried out after the war " In direct contrast, was its status in the summer of 1944, when a victorious Moscow forbade this same Government's return to that part of Poland which had now been ' liberated ' by the Red Army, and installed its own puppet instead.

The most important asset of the Polish Government was its unquestionable constitutional legality, and the backing given to it by the Underground State and people Moscicki, the President of the Polish Republic in 1939, having been interned with his Government in Rumania, transferred his rights to Raczkiewicz The existing Cabinet resigned and the President called upon Sikorski in Paris to create a new one. Sikorski had been in close touch with France for some years and it was anticipated that he would be the right man to smooth over difficulties in connection with the French authorities This change-over in the Polish Government was carried out in accordance with the Constitution of Poland, and there never was, either among the Polish political parties, or among the other Powers, any question of doubt as to its legality Even Moscow had recognised this fully by signing a treaty with that Government in 1941. Now, aiming at its destruction, the Soviets were questioning the legality of the foundations of the Polish Government.

Using the pretext that this Government was based on the Constitutional Law of 1935, which was supposed to be ' Fascist ' and so on, they (the Soviets) were now stating that a rightful Polish Government could be formed only under the Constitution of 1921. To pacify Moscow, the British Foreign Office was prepared to recognise the former's claim to that half of Poland already occupied by the Red Army, and was prepared to go even further and further in their gradual capitulation towards the Kremlin and its plan to limit the independence and sovereignty of the remainder of Poland In 1939, the method of appeasement at the cost of a weaker Ally had reached its climax in the demarche of the British and French Ambassadors when, only a day prior to the German invasion of Poland, they had requested the Polish Government to recall the order for general mobilisation. The same policy in 1944 led to the Polish Premier being sent to Moscow uninvited, and afterwards to the removal of the Polish Commander-in-Chief General Sosnkowski from office,

when he did not meet with approval in the Kremlin. The problem of the Polish citizens deported to Russia was no longer mentioned.

The subsequent events went according to plan. Moscow made impossible demands of the Poles, which the Polish Government in duty bound refused. The British Government intervened and the Polish Government gave in. Immediately Moscow expressed its dissatisfaction and put forward further demands. The path was retraced again and again until Moscow was satisfied that the will of its victim was crushed, after which all negotiations ceased.

Mikolajczyk returned from Moscow where, contrary to the wish of his own Cabinet, he had carried out a discussion with the representatives of the ' Lublin Committee,' and the Soviet ' Council of National Liberation ' The British pressure on the Polish Government was no longer disguised, torn from its native land it was gradually losing more and more of its independence. The dozen meetings which Eden held with Mikolajczyk were mentioned in every daily newspaper, the headlines ran . "Allies pressing for a Soviet pact with Poland," "Allies urging the Polish-Soviet agreement " . . . The British Press again employed the term ' compromise ' —Poland must make a compromise with Russia in order that the abandonment of Poland by Downing Street should be disguised. The Editor of the *Nineteenth Century and After* wrote straight to the point :

" Every compromise in the Polish question was a compromise at the expense of Poland Poland owes the repeated loss of her liberties not to conquest but to compromise. To-day, for the third time in her history, she is being compromised out of existence. Compromise is, indeed, the classical method of bringing Polish national independence to an end—it has achieved, and continues to achieve, what was never achieved by force of arms alone. That is why the Poles to-day are uncompromising. The concessions they have been and are still being asked to make, would not, as is generally supposed, mean the sacrifice of a part to save the rest, but the sacrifice of a part to make the loss of the rest the quicker, the surer, and the more irretrievable "

As the result of British pressure to obtain a ' compromise,' Mikolajczyk placed in the quandary of either or else . . . elaborated a fresh plan for a settlement of the Russo-Polish dispute. The Mikolajczyk Memorandum dealt with the foreign and internal Polish policy, placing it in the control of the Big Three after the Polish Government had been set up in the freed capital The Memorandum moreover proposed that this Government, based on the main political parties, should offer the Communists (the Polish Workers' Party, P P R) equal representation with the parties which now composed the Polish Government. It also suggested that the diplomatic relations between the Polish Government and the Soviet Union should be renewed, and an agreement concluded regarding the administration of the Polish forces, and for the " definite co-operation of the Red Army and securing its rear in Poland." Regarding the frontier problem, the author of the Memorandum pointed out that (*a*) Poland should not be diminished as a result of the war (i.e.,

for losses on the East she ought to receive territories on the West); (*b*) the main centres of cultural life and raw materials on the East should be left her, namely, Wilno, Lwów and the oilfields; (*c*) the transfer of population between new Poland and Russia should be voluntary and (*d*) the final settlement of the Polish-Soviet frontier would be made by the Polish Parliament.

Tacitly the Memorandum was agreeing to the change in frontiers. Furthermore, it was also falling in with Stalin's wish that the Polish institution of a C.-in-C. should be abolished, although this was masked by the paragraph that the " conduct of the war and administration of the armed forces will be transferred to the War Cabinet formed by the Government." Added to this was the point that all Polish forces will be united—in other words, the troops fighting alongside the British would probably be transferred to the Soviet sphere of influence. The Memorandum concluded with the statement that elections should be held at the earliest moment and that an adjustment in the Polish Constitution would permit of the execution of all these changes. As to the Government, it was anticipated that, until the elections, a single National Council, consisting of the four main parties and the Communists, should administer authority.

The document did not meet with the unanimous support of the Polish Cabinet—the Polish Socialist Party submitted its own plan, in which it proposed that the settlement of the frontiers, " must be left to the peace conference," and that " the activities of the Soviet troops on Polish territory will cease simultaneously with those of the Anglo-Americans in France," and that " the U.S.S R will release the deported Polish citizens " Furthermore, that the Communists should be admitted into the Government only if they " recognised the basic rules of the Polish policy as expressed in the Declaration of the ' Council of National Unity ' of March 15, 1944."

The Council of National Unity, the highest body of authority in Poland,* in Proclamation to the Polish people, on July 26 and August 15, 1944, once more repeated the essential thesis of its political programme of March 15:

The basis of Poland's system, as a democratic Republic, will be :—

* Kowalski, S, *Poland and Russia* After the crossing of the Polish Border by Soviet troops London, 1944 —

" the Polish community in the Home Country has shown a truly remarkable talent for organisation which is all the more noteworthy if we consider that the existing conditions offer very little chance for such activities For the past four years the Poles have not only suffered, giving their blood and life in thousands, but they have been organising too At present Poland is organised and united to such a degree, as never perhaps before in its history. This organisation is considerable, and its qualities even surpass all those of the Polish executive authorities forced to work in exile The Polish Government, which, in the years 1939, 1940 and 1941, carried out jointly all state, legislative and executive functions, has now reverted to the normal activities of a government in a democratic state, limiting itself to the functions of an executive body, while vital decisions on all important problems are now taken by the people of Poland itself."

(a). A future Constitution assuring efficient government in accordance with the will of the people.
(b). A democratic system of elections to legislative and local governmental bodies.
(c) A re-organisation of the agrarian system by the parcelling and distribution of German property and of all estates over fifty hectares and the transfer of the excess of agricultural population to work in industry
(d). The socialisation of key industries.
(e). Co-operation of employees and workers in the direction and control of industrial production
(f) A guarantee of work and adequate conditions of existence to all citizens
(g) A just distribution of the national income.
(h). The extension of education and culture to all without exception.

Mikolajczyk's Memorandum was forwarded to Warsaw at the end of August when the battle for that city was raging at its height. It was accompanied by the explanation that it was the only way to ensure continued British support In the event of it being rejected, " the last threads uniting us with the British will snap . . . " which could only mean to those people fighting in Warsaw that the city would be left to her own fate.

The ' Council of National Unity ' in the Polish capital received the Memorandum at a time when the main problem was to survive for one more day They realised that if help did not come and the Germans crushed the rising then the sacrifice of the Capital and the Home Army would be in vain At such a bitter moment they had scant opportunity to consider the document.

But, despite this, the ' Council ' replied by declaring its desire to help the Government reach a solution of the Polish-Soviet difficulties, stating " it was faced with the making of a decision, the motives underlying which it did not understand, as sufficient information of the existing international situation was not reaching the Council " It agreed that the Government in London could commence negotiations, but added a number of restrictions suggested and forwarded by the Socialists which considerably changed the essentials of the Memorandum. First and foremost, the ' Council of National Unity ' stated that an agreement with Russia could be concluded only if accompanied by the guarantee of Britain and the United States, and only after representatives of the Polish Government had arrived in Warsaw to form a new government. The ' Council ' then asked that Russia should recognise the Home Army and release the Polish citizens who had been imprisoned by the Soviet occupation authorities, and that representatives of the United States and Britain should simultaneously arrive in Warsaw " The elections," emphasised the ' Council,' " could only be undertaken after the Soviet troops had left Poland." It went on to comment on the Polish Government's " change of policy regarding its country, which had opened the way for a withdrawal from the frontier of the Riga Treaty," and noted as well " that it had laid itself

open to possible interference by a foreign Power in the internal and military affairs of Poland and introduces the factor of the Russian policy, i e, the Communist Party, into Polish life" Finally, the 'Council' agreed to the postponement of the frontier question as being part of the plans for a general peace settlement.

But, as it was to transpire, the author of the Memorandum was over-optimistic in expecting the Kremlin to agree to undertake democratic elections in the country which the Red Army was occupying, or allow the Polish people to settle their affairs alone. The 'Council of National Unity' in Warsaw was also far from reality in expecting the United States and Britain to guarantee any status quo on the Vistula or that Moscow, blinded with success, would agree to such an action. Although the affair was handled under adverse conditions the 'Council' sent its reply as requested. When, however, they had more opportunity to study the Memorandum at greater length, they found it to be completely inadmissable. The Government Delegate (Vice-Premier) and the Commander-in-Chief of the Home Army expressed their opinion that the Memorandum meant nothing less than capitulation, since every important political move was exclusively dependent on the good-will of the Soviets, without any question of a guarantee from either the Allies or Moscow. Therefore, the 'Council of National Unity' declared the Memorandum to be incompatible with Polish sovereignty and independence.

"In such an important moment for Poland's future," wired the Underground Army's Commander-in-Chief, "I think it is my duty to express in the name of the Home Army which I command and doubtlessly in agreement with the opinion of the Polish people, that Poland has not made enormous sacrifices and fought the Germans for five years in order to capitulate to Russia. When Warsaw began the fight a month ago, a fight which has been continued with a meaningless help from the outside world, it was not in order that our Government should give way under pressure of circumstances, and force upon our people a submission to a prevalence, a submission which history would condemn

"By our fight against Germany, we have proved that we are able to express our determined will to be free, for we love freedom more than life itself. If it is necessary, we shall repeat this in defiance of the whole world, and we shall fight all who endeavour to destroy our freedom"

The Council of National Unity added that, "the agreement with the Soviets should not be concluded in such a way as to allow England and the United States to assume that they were thereby released from their guarantees and promises which they had given to Poland"

Despite the restrictions added to the Memorandum in Warsaw, the document was forwarded by Mikolajczyk to Moscow, London and Washington. Stalin, however, was little concerned with plans formulated in London and, as *Tass* stated, "transferred this document to the 'Polish Committee of National Liberation' since the problems raised in it can only be settled by the Poles themselves."

Thus Poland's status, her independence and her sovereignty, had been levelled by Moscow to a constitutional conflict between two groups of

Poles. Stalin by one move released himself from the necessity of further parley with the Polish Government, and carried on with his series of *faites accomplis*, using his self-appointed Polish ' Committee ' as cover

By this one stroke, the Polish Government had been swept off the chess board, and the British attempts to come to some agreement cleverly and contemptuously outwitted. Moscow, in the meantime, again forwarded the demand that certain anti-Russian elements in the Polish Government should be removed, the first and foremost on the list being the Commander-in-Chief, General Sosnkowski

" The starving people," broadcast *Deutschlandsender* on September 10, " with glaring eyes are coming out from the cellars and sewers and flinging themselves on the German soldiers with arms where they have them, and with fists where they have nothing else. The battle of Stalingrad was child's play in comparison with Warsaw." The Polish capital was fighting for its life ; the Home Army was still fighting in the rear of the Germans along the Eastern front. In Italy the Polish troops were carving their way back to their country through the Gothic Line and they were fighting in France and in Holland side by side with the Anglo-American armies. Great sections of the Polish people were still under German occupation, some were exiled in Russia, others had been sent to forced labour in Germany, yet the Soviet-sponsored ' Committee ' in Lublin, acting in that part of Poland between the ' Curzon Line ' and the Vistula (containing about five million inhabitants, that is, one-seventh of the pre-war population of the country), as if its authority was unchallenged, chose this moment to take decisions without consulting the Polish people, and to announce the settlement of most important political and national problems, for which those same people would be obliged to suffer the consequences. Unknown names or persons with a criminal record, heard of for the first time in public through the medium of Moscow radio, were taking decisions of a magnitude which, in democratic countries, could not be decided without due consideration, debates and the agreement of the people, Parliament and Government.

On September 9, an Agreement was concluded between the ' Lublin Committee ' and the Soviet Ukrainian and Soviet White Russian Governments, and with ' Soviet Lithuania ' a few days later, which provided for the ' exchange and resettlement ' of nationals The Poles who had been residing in Eastern Poland up to September 18, 1939, were to be evacuated to the West, behind the ' Curzon Line,' and the Ukrainians, White Ruthenians and Lithuanians from Western Poland were to be sent to the east of the ' Curzon Line.' Since there were no White Ruthenians or Lithuanians, and only a few Ruthenians in that part of Poland, this could only mean that several million Poles were to be evicted from Eastern Poland. As the matters stood in the autumn of 1944, there did not seem to be any need for this transfer since the bulk of the population in Eastern

Poland was already in the process of being removed by the Soviets under the cloak of military service to various parts of Russia In his speech at the signing of the agreement, Osubka, the Chairman of the 'Lublin Committee,' declared that it had been able to "solve the question which had for centuries strained the neighbourly relations of the two countries."

On September 13, it was announced in Lublin that the Chairman of their sponsored Home Council, Boleslaw Bierut, a Russian citizen and an official of the Comintern, would, under the 1921 Constitution, "exercise the powers of the President of the Polish Republic for the time being." In the 1919 election to the Diet, which had elaborated this Polish Constitution, the Communists had gained two seats out of a total of 444. Yet on this basis, in 1944 Moscow was claiming a dictatorship in Poland for the Communists.

Supported by Russian guns and acting as a dictatorial power, the 'Lublin Committee' began to change the existing social and economical order in Poland, preparing it for the introduction of the Soviet régime. In twenty-one days the 'Committee' issued twenty-one decrees to this end, decrees which over-balanced the foundations of the existing status of life and totally disorganised it. On July 30 a decree was issued ordering the confiscation of all real estates owned by the German nationals and those persons guilty of high treason and undesirable to the new administrators; it was a normal procedure of Tsardom, closely emulated by the Soviets in any newly acquired territories. As it immediately transpired, these 'traitors' proved to be everyone who was connected with the Underground.

The 'Committee' had no need to prepare so many decrees, for each one was the replica of those already issued by the Comintern during its revolutionary practice in various countries. The most characteristic being that relating to land reform issued on August 18. It was identical with the one Bela Kuhn had published during his short Bolshevik rule in Hungary The reactionary decree, in lofty magnificent phrases which had no bearing on the existing agrarian position and its possibilities in that country, promised everything to the peasants of Poland. The suppression of the large estates and their subsequent division among smallholders was ordered to be carried out within a few weeks, and, since the nominated Chairman of that reform, Andrzej Witos, failed to execute this ruin of the agricultural system in the alloted time, he was sacked on October 10. In the arena of politics, steps were taken to create sponsored political parties to act as rivals to those which formed the Polish Government in London, particularly the Peasant and Socialist Party. Within a few weeks the 'Committee' and Moscow were able to state triumphantly that at the Congress of these Parties in Lublin, the 'Committee of National Liberation,' had been recognised without restriction, etc. But no names of any outstanding political figure in these two parties were mentioned. According to the statement of Osubka, Chairman of the Committee,

" opposition to their work in the liberated territories was confined to terrorists," an announcement which gave them the excuse for unbridled persecutions.

One of the first movements of the ' Committee ' was to disband the police and set up a militia under the auspices of the N.K.V D. In Lublin a special Commission, comprising officials from the ' Committee ' and officials from the N.K V.D., was established to investigate all anti-Soviet activities up to 1939 and afterwards. To have been a member of the Home Army, not only under the Soviet occupation in 1939-1941, but also under German occupation, was considered sufficient proof of this guilt.

One of the first activities of the Committee was the erection in Lublin of a monument to an ' unknown soldier of the Red Army ' which was unveiled on August 28, even while the troops of the Polish Home Army were being disarmed and imprisoned in the renowned Majdanek camp. Since the Germans had already destroyed every monument throughout the country, including that of the unknown soldier in Warsaw, this edifice to a Russian soldier (' liberator ' according to Moscow, ' oppressor ' according to the Polish people) was the only monument in Poland There was no parallel instance where a statue to an unknown British or American soldier had been erected in France, Belgium or Holland while a war was being fought.

" We are witnessing the death of a city harbouring over a million people, the destruction of a population, whose only sin is the will for freedom and loyalty to the Allies . . We are witnessing the infliction of such monstrous wrongs that, in face of them, all ideology, all alleged causes and aims of this war, all that makes life worth living, becomes meaningless, while all programmes, treaties, pledges and assurances become a mockery.

" In the name of thousands of Polish airmen who gave their lives in the defence of this island during the Battle of Britain, in the name of Polish sailors who perished in the Arctic seas escorting Allied convoys to Murmansk and Archangel, in the name of Polish soldiers whose graves are scattered at Narvik and Tobruk, at Gazala and Monte Cassino, at Ancona and Falaise, we ask you to help . . .

" . . . We need your voice, we need your pen and your courage at a time when courage is needed to call for help for a perishing ally, when courage is needed to demand that wrongs should be redressed,"

wrote the Polish writers in an appeal to their American and British colleagues.

By the first days of September, the situation in Warsaw had grown serious The Germans had pressed forward and part of the ground, known as the Old Town, had to be abandoned. General Bór reported that losses among the defenders of this district amounted to eighty per cent in one month of fighting. The 1,300 soldiers still living were evacuated The German force employed to conquer the Old Town comprised ten battalions of infantry, two battalions of pioneers with full

support of Tiger and Goliath tanks, artillery and flame-throwers—after two weeks of attack it achieved its target.

The Times gave a further dispatch from Lieutenant J. Ward, the British airman in Warsaw, sent on September 2 —

" In spite of lack of ammunition and weapons, the troops of the Polish Home Army continue to hold all their positions intact with the exception of the Old Town Here the enemy attacks have been so fierce—air bombing, artillery—that it has been impossible for the Polish troops to hold on In some places they have been forced to surrender some ruins to the enemy. There is now not a single undamaged house in the Old Town Nothing remains but ruins and debris, among which here and there stand fragments of walls not yet levelled to the ground. Streets no longer exist

" The Old Town covered a small area and had narrow, winding streets. The density of the population was very high—about 100,000 people, which increased rapidly as thousands of refugees came from other districts About half this population have been wounded or killed. Almost every soldier, if not killed, has received a wound of some sort The population which is still in the Old Town shelter in cellars under the ruins, which offer almost no protection against enemy attacks.' Hence it is that these cellars often become collective graves for the hundreds who sought shelter there.

" In the other parts of the city the Germans are continuing their periodical air, artillery and mine-thrower attacks . The list of casualties mounts daily. It is impossible to calculate yet just how high the losses of life are. All Polish military prisoners who fall into German hands are murdered."

On September 4, Lieutenant John Ward wired again to *The Times*, but this telegram was not published :—

" To-day is the thirty-fifth day of the battle for the Polish Capital, a city with a population of 1,300,000 people. During those thirty-five days no food has reached Warsaw Rations are already very short, in many places people are starving . the small children receive no milk . . . The people here listen with hungry envy to the liberation of Paris after four days of fighting They heard that the British Army rushed thousands of tons of the medical supplies to the French population Warsaw during the first few days of the uprising received some such needed help in form of ammunition dropped by the R A.F , but for past two or three weeks had received no relief whatsoever.

" Poland is our oldest ally Despite all she has suffered at the hands of the German invaders, she has remained always an active power against the enemy . Poland is a country which I, as an Englishman, am proud to call an Ally She produced no government to co-operate with the Germans. The only Government she has acknowledged is the one in exile in London. To end, I would like to make an appeal to the British nation. It is short :— ' Help for Warsaw.'

On September 7, *Dziennik Polski* in London wrote with bitterness :—

" The Old Town district of Warsaw has fallen after thirty-four days of heroic fighting It has fallen because our Allies have not managed in thirty-seven days to organise help for the garrison of Warsaw, and her population, who are making almost inhuman sacrifices. The Old Town of Warsaw has fallen ! It has fallen saturated in the blood of the most noble of those fighting for freedom. And it was not as if help could not have reached them in time, when thousands of Allied aircraft were dropping weapons throughout the length and breadth of Europe, giving them un-

stintingly to every new movement of resistance, however weak. Arms were lacking only for the veterans of the fighting in this war, who are fighting for life or death against the foe, the enemy not only of Poland, but of humanity itself"

"Poland, Polish people, will never forget!"

On September 6, the Mayor of Underground Warsaw sent a message to the Lord Mayor of London and to the Mayor of New York city —

"As Mayor of the Polish capital, I feel myself authorised to put two questions which are being asked daily by the people of Warsaw First, why have we been left solitary, and for so long, why have arms, ammunition and food not been supplied to us? Secondly, why have not aircraft been sent with succour? We need above all bombers which might prevent the Germans from destroying Warsaw, district by district We appeal to the conscience of civilised nations. Only immediate help, if given by them, may have an effect"

He received a reply only from La Guardia, Mayor of New York City :—

"The people of Warsaw are fighting the Nazis, our enemies, the enemies of Britain and of Russia They asked for arms and ammunition to be dropped by aircraft, as in other places .

"The people of Warsaw are not asking for sympathy. They are not asking for the unreasonable They are only asking for that co-operation to which they are entitled as an ally, and which I believe they have every right to expect"

On September 7, the Warsaw radio Station *Blyskavica* broadcast:—

"The situation is very serious The enemy is carrying out a systematic destruction of the centre of the capital The civilian population who left the districts most affected by the fighting are now crowding the adjacent districts. Food is very scarce There is no electric light and the water supply has been cut off"

By September 8, "the fighting has assumed an intensity which has reached the limits of human endurance."

The German report of this fortieth day of the struggle was quoted by D.N B., giving details of the battle .—

. . . "In the early morning the three German wedges operating in the North of Warsaw came close together and linked up. The ring round Warsaw North—a nest of stubborn resistance—was closed.

"It would only have been a matter of common-sense for them to admit the senselessness of further resistance, but the German offer inviting surrender was ignored. Once more the mad urge of a few to assert themselves raised the torch of fire over the shambles and ruins of Warsaw, one-time city of millions of inhabitants. In all its mercilessness the chaos was spreading. In few minutes this hidden struggle against barricaded *francs-tireurs* and death lurking behind a hundred windows, skylights and cellar-holes had turned into a fight for the nerve-centre of the resistance, and for their Staffs and Commands Four times in one day the reckless German assault of the Stock Exchange block was resumed.

"A ceaseless hail of bombs from our ground-attack aircraft once more rained down on the burning houses, relentlessly our multiple mortars fired, salvos of artillery and mortar fire followed one another. In between, the manoeuvrable Goliaths pushed their way towards the barricades. More than ever before, the fight for the last remaining nests of resistance still maintaining their fire became an individual struggle of man against man. The unremitting blows dealt by the German battlegroups and the heavy

war machinery had created an inferno such as no city had had to experience before in this war "

On September 12, the Polish Government issued a statement (seemingly dictated by the British Foreign Office) thanking the British Government for their help, testifying that, during the forty days of the fighting in Warsaw, one hundred tons of supplies, weapons and ammunition had been delivered, and quoting the number of Allied airmen, including 119 Poles, who had been lost in these attempts.* On that same day, September 12, the Russians began their assault and approached the suburb of Praga on the right shore of the Vistula, and for two days prior to this action, their planes, attacking the German Luftwaffe, had appeared over the city On September 14, the Russians occupied Praga. A few battalions of the First Soviet-Polish Division tried to force a crossing over the Vistula, but this action carried out on a small scale was unsuccessful, and only one battalion with the help of the insurgents managed to cross the river. On the same day, the 45th fighting day for the capital, the Russians dropped a small amount of food and ammunition on the suburbs, the food, a few sacks containing biscuits, were destroyed by the impact with the ground.

On September 17, the anniversary of the Red Army's invasion of Poland, a number of Flying Fortresses (8th American Air Force) dropped supplies on Warsaw containing ammunition and food, and continued on, to land on Russian airfields. The losses on this trip were negligible The supplies delivered were only enough for two or three days. On the same day a large force of the Home Army who, at an order issued by General Bór at the beginning of August, had marched to the rescue of Warsaw but had been unable to reach the city, assembled in the great forests twenty miles west of Warsaw, and there, after a bitter fight, and without supplies, were finally encircled and overcome

The city of Warsaw could have been rescued, had there been any sort of working agreement between the Allies, either in the form of mass supplies from the Anglo-Americans or by the Russians in the first days of August, when nearly the whole of the town had been in the hands of the insurgents, or even during the last days of its fight, by a Russian push across the Vistula or by their action from the region of Warka, 30 miles from Warsaw, where they had established a bridgehead. The battle in Warsaw raged for sixty-three days, and there had been time enough to organise and undertake some sort of an action, in order to save the flower of the Polish nation fighting its desperate struggle alone.

The attitude of the Russians, or rather the extent of their accusations against the Polish Government and Warsaw, varied during the course of that sixty-three days. They had feigned surprise at the outbreak of the rising, and yet Stalin had said to Mikolajczyk " he was expecting to occupy

* Sinclair, Air Minister, on October 4th stated in the House of Commons that 28 planes and 190 airmen had been lost.

Warsaw on August 6." Stalin had promised the Polish Premier to bring help to the city, but he obviously came to the conclusion that it would be illogical to help this Polish Home Army in Warsaw when so many of its troops had already been disarmed by the Red Army.

Moscow used the 'Lublin Committee' as its mouth-piece to justify its inactivity during this period and, on the 6th of August, its representatives Osubka and Lyzvinski-Zymierski, declared "that there was no rising in Warsaw." But when the World Press began to emphasise the magnitude of this battle, the Soviets were forced to recognise the facts that Warsaw was fighting. The 'Committee' put forward accusations "that the rising was premature, and that they were unable to get information as to where they were to drop the supplies, that it was indeed impossible to drop them since the insurgents were only occupying isolated buildings.'

As recently as September 4, *Pravda* had expressed its disappointment that Soviet aircraft were unable to drop supplies "for those victims of the provocation still holding out in a few of the streets and houses in Warsaw" When, in the middle of September, the Soviet Government agreed to permit American aircraft carrying supplies for Warsaw to land on the airfields of the American Eastern Command in the territory occupied by the Red Army, the 'Committee' reverted once again to the line taken in the days before the uprising and began to incite Warsaw's population to fight on and submit themselves to the "orders of one Polish Commander-in-Chief." After the unsuccessful attempt by the Red Army to cross the Vistula, Moscow once more changed its attitude and the 'Committee' returned to the theme of an "ill-timed rising, and the irresponsibility of the Polish leaders in Warsaw, particularly General Bór."

As the outcome of Soviet-British pressure, General Sosnkowski had been relieved of his post* and General Bór was made his successor, an appointment which brought an outburst of fury from Moscow. Stalin had demanded that Sosnkowski should be sacked, as by this move he anticipated that the swift disruption of the Polish army and its subordination to his nominee Zymierski would only be a matter of time. The nomination of Bór outwitted this manoeuvre. Marshal Stalin immediately, therefore on September 30, interviewed the Chairman of the Committee, Osubka, and the Commander, Zymierski, and on the following day, the two men issued remarkable statements at a Press Conference in Moscow, or rather, they seemed unusual statements to the Westerner. Osubka declared :—

"The Poles in London must be mad to appoint General Bór as C.-in-C. of the armed forces under their control. In our opinion he is worse than Sosnkowski.

"He is a war criminal. By organising the premature uprising in Warsaw

*"That was a sacrifice", wrote *The Spectator* on October 6th, "and obviously a humiliating sacrifice to Russian demands. It had been pressed on the Poles by their friends in London . . ."

he is as much responsible for 250,000 people losing their lives during the insurrection as are the Germans for killing them.

" If he fell into our hands we would hand him over for trial."

The British Government and their Press, who had believed that the dismissal of Sosnkowski " would ease the way to renewed good relations between the Russian and the Polish Governments," as the *Daily Telegraph* had written so promptly on September 30, were taken aback. General Bór-Komorowski was in no way connected with politics and his appointment, therefore, had no political significance In an editorial, *Pravda* had commented . " The crisis of the Polish Government is too profound to be solved by a change in personnel, on the contrary, the changes will aggravate the internal struggle going on in the camp of these political failures." Moscow simply wanted the submission of the Polish Army prior to their destruction. This was, in fact, already occurring to those Home Army troops who, at the order of General Bór, had been marching towards Warsaw on their way to help the capital. " In the Lublin district a detachment of 700 soldiers was dissolved," wrote *Dziennik Polski* on October 2 " The famous 27th Infantry Division from Volyn, which was tactically under the command of the Soviet Army and had marched on Warsaw together with the Russians, was trapped in an ambush, disarmed and dissolved in the Lublin and Otwock regions, the operational territory of General Zymierski. Units of the Home Army from the Cracow district, marching to the aid of Warsaw, were also disarmed, and the same applies to the 9th Infantry Division, etc."

Osubka and Zymierski, at the October 1st Press Conference in Moscow, heaped accusation after accusation on the Polish Government, and threatened that, " there will not be a place in the future Government of Poland for those responsible for the Warsaw rising. As yet we do not possess full details about the organising of the rising," declared Zymierski, " but when we do, we shall do our utmost to see that the authors are punished according to their deserts "

Lyzvinski-Zymierski was fully aware that General Bór had been with his headquarters in Warsaw from the commencement of the rising, since Russian liaison officers had contacted him in that City Anticipating, however, that, after the appointment of Bór as the new Commander-in-Chief, orders would, no doubt, be sent for him to join the Government in London immediately, Zymierski alleged that " Bór had never been inside the city since it began to fight," and that " his headquarters were at least twenty miles away," and furthermore, that he " had not established contact with the Red Army," this last statement was true for the Polish Commander-in-Chief had not received any answer to his dispatches from the Russian military authorities. Even his last wire sent on September 30 to Marshal Rokossovsky, that he would be able to fight no longer than 72 hours, was not acknowledged.

Osubka-Morawski and Zymierski, addressing the bewildered foreign

correspondents in Moscow, unwittingly established beyond doubt that the London Government was accepted by the mass of people in the Polish capital, and they had, in fact, raised an insurrection at its order. By blaming first Sosnkowski and then Bór, the two Soviet agents confirmed that it was to these leaders that the Polish people looked for guidance.

The bewilderment of the foreign correspondents at that Press Conference was shared by the world, and listening to such statements as these, as one of the independent British newspapers wrote,

"We may be pardoned the assumption that forces are at work which do not want a settlement, except such as would mean the complete elimination of the Polish Government The rival Polish authorities, so far from pursuing convergent paths, are drifting further apart, and this despite the sincere and patient efforts of the Polish Government in London to pour oil on the troubled waters and to remove from office personalities unacceptable to Moscow and to the 'Committee of National Liberation' The British and Allied Governments, in their search for Polish harmony, seem now to be faced with an all but hopeless task"

But it was not merely a question of Polish harmony, as the writer of the above article viewed the affair, it was a question of British-Russian harmony. Poland was only one of the fields where the Soviets intended to gain full power and eliminate the British influence.

There was no concealing the fact that the hours of dying Warsaw were numbered General Bór's communiqués grew more brief with each passing day.

"Every day brings thousands of fresh victims," wrote General Bór in his report to London. "The cellars of the destroyed houses are graveyards of thousands of people buried alive.

"The self-control of the civilian population in face of an appalling ordeal and the assistance given by it to our armed forces is making our stand possible, but the sufferings of the civilian population are surpassing imagination.

"It is being decimated by bombing and weakened by starvation and lack of water It lives mostly in cellars.

"Some parts of the city are so destroyed and so covered with debris that it is impossible to tell where the streets formerly ran."

The Home Delegate and Vice-Premier reported on September 21:

"Warsaw lies in ruins . The enemy is systematically smashing down street after street with artillery fire and air bombardment. Tens of thousands of people have literally lost everything . . . Because of the ceaseless firing and bombing, even people whose homes have so far been spared are sheltering in the cellars . . . They do not go out into the street, as the streets are under fire, but move about by a complicated, skilfully designed system of communicating cellars under the streets and the courtyards. There has been no light for a long time, the watermains are damaged, many wells have been dug, but there is a shortage of water, and food, bread, flour and fat. There is still a little sugar.

". . . It is impossible to get out of the town The sick, continually being brought from the shattered hospitals in Praga, are in a dreadful condition

"For seven weeks with a minimum amount of supplies dropped by you,

we have carried on the rising. Lack of ammunition and weapons forced us to retreat from fiercely defended houses and streets. We lost the Old Town and Powisle. We fought fully aware of our complete isolation. Gradually, with the growing hopelessness of the situation, the heroic spirit of the soldiers and people began to weaken Twenty thousand people have left the city carrying white flags (from the districts smashed by the enemy), but those who remained are exhausted to the uttermost limits All realise that even after the Capital is freed from the Germans our Gethsemane will not be ended, there is always the tormenting question . What then ? What of Poland, of the Home Army, State Authorities, the political and social life ? What is to be done in face of the calling-up of men by the ' Lublin Committee ' ? And what of the combatant rights for the Home Army ?

" . . . aid from the Allies is indispensable . . . The only lot of supplies dropped by the American force was sufficient for two days . . . shortage of food is so acute now that it is causing starvation, epidemics, typhus, dysentery are raging . . . winter is approaching . . . we are not able to assure the minimum conditions of existence to tens of thousands of wronged people . "

On September 28, one of the three main centres of resistance fell—Mokotów, to be followed two days later by the second, Zolibórz. Only the city centre was holding out with some 260,000 people, half of this number were the refugees from the other districts of Warsaw. The food stock was " about a hundred tons of barley and fifty tons of wheat."

Finally, Warsaw fell, " after having exhausted every means of fighting and all food supplies, on the sixty-third day of her struggle against the overwhelming superiority of the enemy. On October 2, at 22.00 hours, the defenders of Warsaw fired the last shots," reported General Bór.

" We have not wanted to spare our blood," broadcast Warsaw in its last appeal to the peoples of the world. " But without help, this struggle has become hopeless. Something has happened for which those who denied us help are responsible . . . We believe that Warsaw's tragedy will make plain to the peoples of the world the truth of our political situation . . . "

According to the version broadcast by General v. Bach, the German Officer commanding the assault, four regular German divisions (among them Goering's Panzer Division and two S.S. Divisions, " Wiking " and " Totenkopf "), artillery of an Army Group (that is, scores of heavy batteries), the air force, units of the S.S police and fireguards from Krone and Koepeninck using flame-throwers, had been employed in this action. In addition, there were the Russian troops (mentioned in Bór's communiqués) who had transferred their loyalties to the Germans, and a few bands of Ukrainians. A force of over six divisions in all. The defenders had been able to capture 25 tanks and to destroy 250 tanks and self-propelled guns and inflict heavy losses on the enemy. General Bór-Komorowski, fearing reprisals against the population and Home Army, chose to stay with his men. He was captured in the last stronghold and with him 11,000 men in a large block of buildings stretching down to the Vistula. The losses of the Home Army in killed and wounded were 120,000, not including the civilian population. The German losses, according to the statement of their Commander, were even heavier.

" The bodies of the insurgents who have died of starvation," read the German communique, " are lying everywhere in the cellars.

"At the point where the area held by the insurgents touched upon the western bank of the Vistula, the insurgents had repeatedly tried to cross the river to make contact with the Soviet troops on the opposite bank. All the attempts were, however, nipped in the bud by the devastating German fire "

The Moscow radio deemed it necessary to issue a commentary in order to justify its attitude.

" The collapse of the patriots' army was inevitable . . . The Red Army came to a halt, and the patriots were isolated in a flaming city . . . "

The ' mud-slinging ' and accusations thrown against the leaders of the Warsaw insurrection when the " dead have not been buried in the streets of the city " was left to the ' Lublin Committee,' whose agents, after reporting the incredible information that " some detachments in Warsaw, repudiating Bór's decision, broke out and crossed the Vistula (which the powerfully-equipped Red Army had been unable to cross in sixty-three days) added :—

" The insurgent leaders of the Sanacia (Pilsudskyites) camp, are liquidating the uprising in the same way as they started it, and without considering the fate of the heroic insurgents. They prefer to deliver the heroes of Warsaw into German hands rather than let them join forces with the Red Army."

The Germans gave a guarantee that the soldiers of the Home Army would be treated as prisoners-of-war according to the rules of the Geneva Convention and that none would be persecuted for his previous military or political activities, or for any infringement of the German rules and regulations, and that this would also apply to the civilian population, who would, however, have to leave Warsaw. Those who had taken part in the battle would be treated as soldiers, irrespective of sex, and the others, the civilians able to work, would be sent to various labour assignments. This guarantee was not kept . . . The final appeals from Warsaw were sent to the International Red Cross asking for help for the homeless exiles of the city.

" It is true to say that the Germans will never be able to conquer Warsaw," broadcast *Blyskawica* station on the last day it was heard on the ether " for Warsaw no longer exists. There only remains the piles of rubble and the Poles, who fight to-day but who will rebuild their city when the war is over."

One report published in Berlin on the last phase of the Warsaw struggle, quoted by *The Times* on October 9, said, " after the decision to capitulate, the survivors of the First Polish Regiment marched four abreast, in companies, from the ruins. There were 375 officers and 1,250 N.C O s and men, and then 221 women, who had served as Red Cross nurses and liaison messengers The description adds that they marched firmly and proudly in close formation.

" But every face," the report went on, " betrayed terrible disappointment at the treachery of Moscow, London and Washington. The tragedy of this people, who certainly do not lack courage, is that they are broken by their

lack of common sense and political wisdom ; thus on Friday the whole officer corps, with their generals—three regiments altogether—were obliged to leave their completely ruined and burnt-out capital, having lost all hope of British, American or Soviet aid."

A telegram from the Polish women of Warsaw to the women of Great Britain and the United States ended with the words :—" God only is left to us, for we have been forgotten by our Allies."

On October 3rd, when the fate of the Polish capital was sealed, the Council of National Unity issued a Manifesto to the Polish people :—

" Over many centuries the ideas of liberty have shaped the soul of the Polish nation . . . We fought for it uncompromisingly and in every possible condition . . . Faithful to that tradition, in September, 1939, we engaged in solitary struggle with an enemy who had numerical and technical superiority. . . . We were the world's first rampart, when Germany provoked a second war We were conquered, but we refused to be enslaved.

" On August 1, 1944, we began an open struggle against the Germans in Warsaw. We chose this moment because the Russian troops were on the outskirts of Warsaw, because our Western Allies had begun their decisive march to Berlin, because, owing to the large numbers involved, it had become impossible for the Home Army to remain concealed, because desire for freedom, accumulated during the long years of occupation, had become impossible to restrain any longer and, lastly, because behind the German front we were threatened with mass round-ups, deportation of Polish youths and the destruction of our capital city.

" When we openly took up the struggle in Warsaw, we did not suppose that we could beat the Germans alone We counted on the aid of Russia and our Western Allies. We had the right to count on such help at a time when detachments of the Home Army, fighting in Volyn, Wilno area, in Lwów and Lublin, had contributed vitally to the successes of the Russian Army, at a time when Polish forces were fighting and bleeding for the common cause on the fields of Italy and France, on the land, on the sea and in the air.

" We were deceived. We did not receive proper help. The supplies dropped by our Western Allies, and by the Russians—none came in time, nor did it come in any proportion to our requirements. It was non-effective An enormous technical superiority enabled the Germans to reconquer one after another the districts we had won and our situation became gradually hopeless. This is the truth. We have been treated worse than Hitler's allies—Italy, Rumania, Finland . . .

" So we fought alone for nine weeks. Rivers of our blood have soaked into our sacred Polish soil. But now when our soldiers have fired their last shells captured from the enemy, when the mothers of our children have no more food to give them, when the long queues of people can no longer draw water from the exhausted wells, when we have begun to drag the starved dead from the cellars, we have no possibility of continuing the struggle and we must stop.

" For want of serious assistance the Warsaw rising is going under at the very moment when our Army is helping France, Belgium and Holland to their liberation. We refrain from to-day judging this tragic affair. May the just God estimate the terrible wrong which the Polish nation has suffered and let him deal justly with those who have committed that wrong . . .

" In this final phase of the war, the Warsaw rising challenges the world again with the problem of a great nation, fighting gallantly and uncompro-

missingly for the freedom and integrity of her territory, and social justice in the life of the nations, for the noble principles of the Atlantic Charter, and all that the finer part of the world is fighting for to-day."

In one of his telegrams, Lieutenant John Ward of the R.A.F., who fought as an officer in the Polish Home Army in Warsaw, reported that, " the people who had taken shelter in the cellars were either killed or hopelessly trapped under the debris . . . I heard sounds of knocking . . It was impossible however to do anything to help. Hundreds of tons of loose bricks lay over the entrance and the district was under heavy enemy fire."

In these words was a vision of Warsaw and of Poland, trapped in the ruins of Europe, under the debris of the Great Alliance and its Atlantic Charter and guarantees.

THE RUBICON

There are people who think that the modification of the frontiers of a State is nothing more than moving a line a few millimetres on a map. Whereas in truth it is a question of the most fundamental importance to millions of people. I ask those of our British friends who advise us, with the best of intentions, to give up to Soviet Russia our eastern territories, to put themselves the question whether it is right and just to condemn millions of people, who in Poland had their private property protected by the State, freedom of speech, of association, and of political opinion, and the assurance of a religious education for their children at school, to the loss of all these rights by handing them over to a totalitarian State which does not recognise the right to hold private property, in which all political parties except the Communist, are prohibited, where a man may be sent without trial (as I was) by a mere administrative order, to eight years' compulsory labour camp, and where atheism is taught in the schools

(Grabski, S , *The Polish-Russian Frontier*, London, 1943, p. 36).

Throughout the years of war, turbulent Poland proved to be the most difficult spot in German-occupied Europe. Himmler, the Gestapo chief responsible for holding the countries from the Atlantic to Russia under an iron heel, blamed his representatives in Poland, but, listening to the reports during his last visit to Warsaw in the summer of 1944, he is quoted to have exclaimed . " Yes, there is only one way to deal with these people, that is to expel them from the city."

It appears that, by the end of July, 1944, the Germans had partially undertaken this task, and, on the first day of August, they were made to realise how right Himmler had been, for on that day the citizens of Warsaw transformed themselves into soldiers of the Home Army. The struggle of those people of Warsaw, so poorly equipped with weapons against the powerfully-armed Germans, waged before the eyes of the mightily-armed and unmoved Russian Red Army of ' Liberation ' had

all the features of an ancient Greek tragedy where there was no escape for the victim. Hundreds of heavy guns pounded the city, fires raged through the streets from the first day to the last; pillars of smoke rose high into the air and hung like a shroud over the battlefield And the Russian spectators standing on the other side of the Vistula hurled, not help, but threats across to the fighting people of Warsaw, threats against the Home Army, against their leader, who, in the event of survival, was " to be brought to trial and punished—with death "

In September, 1939, when the Second Great War broke out, the Red Army did not come to the assistance of Poland, but linked arms with the Germans. In the autumn of 1944, the Red Army quietly watched the Germans in their sinister action in Warsaw. Unobstructed by the Russian air force, the Luftwaffe carried on its destruction, augmented by the Russian guns then firing round for round with the Germans into the burning town There was no consolation in the statement by Moscow that, " since Warsaw was so much destroyed, the Russian artillery could do little more in the way of damage." The British Government advertised the measures taken to assist Warsaw The Polish Premier broadcasting from London to his people in the homeland, bitterly commented that this help was but an illusion and could not compare with their desperate efforts On the following day, he conveyed the thanks of his country to the British Government, hoping it might speed up help for the Polish capital. On the day after that, he once more begged Churchill, Roosevelt and Stalin not to stand back and watch Warsaw die.

'Assistance' from Russia was given in the Soviet way. Their propaganda boasted that they " made use of slow-flying training bi-planes which enabled them to drop supplies on to a strictly defined area," but omitted to explain that these supplies, both meagre and unsatisfactory, were dropped in sacks without protection and without parachutes attached. The people of the capital gathered the dust and remnants of the Russian supplies from the earth where, and if, they were able to find the traces.

The history of the supplies and the extent of the help given to Warsaw was little known at this juncture; it was clear, however, that no real help could be given without action on the part of the Red Army troops who were in the offing . . . Such an action would have enabled the city to carry on the fight until the defeat of the Germans on the Vistula had been achieved by a large-scale Red Army offensive.

There appeared two alternatives as to why the British and Americans had ceased any further supplies to Warsaw by air. Either it was a result of Russian demands, or else the decision was due to the conviction that, as the Russians had decided against moving forward, the city must already be in its death throes . . . Therefore any supplies would serve merely to prolong its agony And considering both these alternatives, London and Washington left Warsaw to its fate . . . the Priest and the Levite had chosen to pass on the other side of the street.

From amongst the numerous protests heard in Britain against the Government's policy of inactivity towards Warsaw, the Scottish Conservative M.P.'s went straight to the point .—

" We desire most deeply and strongly that every possible assistance should be given to the Poles. We do not know what is still physically practicable, nor can we be sure whether the possibilities have been limited by the action or inaction of other Governments.

" We believe that what our Government has done and is doing should be made abundantly clear It should be known beyond doubt what limitations, if any, have been imposed upon its activities and by whom. Where such limitations arise from the action of other Governments, the public should be assured that our Government has made crystal-clear what it thought right and desirable."

It would indeed have been a precedent had those sixteen Scottish M.P.s received an answer at that time, when conspiracy and secrecy in foreign affairs had become the rule rather than the exception.

It was only on September 26 that the British Premier gave evasive and ambiguous explanations in reply to questions in the House of Commons regarding help for the city of Warsaw, particularly in relation to the role played by the Soviets in this affair. The explanations, overflowing with diplomatic sophistry, did not help to dispel the existing doubts and uneasiness.

" I welcome this opportunity of paying tribute to the heroism and tenacity of the Polish Home Army and population of Warsaw, who, after five years of oppression, have yet fought for nearly two months to contribute all in their power to the expulsion of the Germans from the capital of Poland.

" His Majesty's Government have always made it clear to all concerned that they were too far from the scene to undertake responsibility for ordering or supporting a general rising in Poland At the same time, they have consistently used their good offices to promote co-operation and co-ordination of plans in regard to such matters between the Polish and Soviet authorities, and, despite the formidable practical difficulties, they have furnished military supplies by air to the Polish Home Army. As soon as His Majesty's Government learnt that the rising in Warsaw had begun, they expressed to the Soviet Government their hope that, although such co-ordination had not yet been achieved, they would nevertheless bring such aid to the Polish insurgents as lay in their power. The Soviet armies were at that time engaged in heavy fighting with strong German forces to the east and north-east of Warsaw, but when their operational plans permitted and direct contact had been established with the Polish Commander-in-Chief in Warsaw they sent supplies to the Polish forces and provided them with air cover and anti-aircraft support. This assistance has been gratefully acknowledged by the Polish Prime Minister and by the Polish Commander-in-Chief in Warsaw.

" Meanwhile, the Royal Air Force, despite the very great practical difficulties and in the face of heavy losses, themselves made the long flight from Mediterranean bases to Warsaw with supplies on all occasions when weatherconditions permitted In their statement issued on September 13th, the Polish Government published particulars and expressed appreciation of this assistance. On September 18th, a large escorted force of United States heavy bombers carried out a successful operation, which was planned in co-operation with the Soviet High Command but which was unavoidably

postponed for several days because of bad weather. This force, after dropping a large quantity of supplies in Warsaw, the bulk of which came from British sources, flew on to bases in Soviet territory, escorted by Soviet aircraft."

In this Statement, one point needed clarifying—the part played by the Soviets. According to the report of General Bór in May, 1945, on his arrival in London from German captivity, contact between the Red Army and the Polish Commander-in-Chief, mentioned by Churchill, never existed. Bór did not receive one answer to the many telegrams he despatched, either directly or indirectly through his Government, to the leaders of the Red Army. In actual fact, this contact was limited on the Russian side to sending their agents and officers for information, which was willingly given them by the Home Army. The Americans made one expedition only in those sixty-three days of the battle of Warsaw—but during that time, however, they carried out numerous raids to help the Red Army in its task of 'liberating' South-Eastern Europe.

It seems that no other instance of mass heroism and sorrow, bravery and misfortune, in the war had the same effect on the world opinion as this struggle of the Polish capital. "The incredible tragedy of Warsaw," commented one of the leading American journalists, "has shocked and startled the circles of the United Nations here as nothing else has since Pearl Harbour."* The World Press gave it the fullest publicity. The communiqués of General Bór were printed on the front pages. The English Press, having failed in the attempt to pass over the affair in silence, now endeavoured to write as little as possible on it. To the readers of many English newspapers the rising passed unnoticed, and when the Germans afterwards quit the ruins of the Polish capital—Warsaw liberated! was the tone of that Press.

Beyond any other feature of the rising, the grandeur of the Warsaw battle lay in the hoisting once again of the moral standards in this war. The free radio of the Polish capital talked in a language which had been forgotten by the diplomats of the Great Alliance, it spoke of how 'the Polish people were fighting for the freedom and victory of moral forces, for the survival of the whole of their country, for the towns of Wilno and Lwów (this in particular roused adverse comment from Moscow and some of the London papers), and that the fate of Poland could not be settled by any secret agreement between Churchill, Stalin and Roosevelt in Teheran, just as five years earlier it could not be settled by the pact between Ribbentrop and Molotov in Moscow.' 'The war,' claimed the people fighting in Warsaw, 'cannot end with the partition of Poland, no matter who contemplates such an attempt. No one in the world has the right to give away half our country either to our eastern neighbour or to our western one.'

* Simms, W. P., *Washington Daily News*, October 5th.

The struggle of Warsaw brought to the surface the truth regarding the incompatibility between the Soviet and the Anglo-Saxon Powers over the question of the exploitation of victory, a state of affairs which the respective Foreign Offices had managed to bury so thoroughly until that moment. The basic differences connected with the projects for the new world order were revealed as Warsaw burnt, and through its smoke the planned Russian aggression at last became clear to the man-in-the-street.

Britain had not entered the war in 1939 because of any special sympathy for the Poles, but as a result of her conviction that aggression, even in that distant corner of Europe, was a menace to her peace and well-being In August, 1944, Warsaw showed the British and American people that, while one aggressor battered the unfortunate city, the other was waiting for the moment to exploit the murderer's deed for his own purpose. It was disturbing to watch Moscow's intentions with regard to Poland, how she began to determine that country's frontiers, not only between Russia and Poland, but the Polish-German frontier as well, without consulting the Polish people. It was disturbing to watch Moscow doing its best to give Poland only as much 'integrity and independence' as her whim dictated, choosing a 'government' for Poland, placing Comintern agents at the head and an ex-criminal as the C.-in-C., and then concluding a treaty with this 'government,' on the basis of which territories were annexed, and millions of people were to be removed from their homes.

If, in the August and September of 1944, there still existed some who believed that Russia would tolerate a State which might be called a truly independent Poland, those dreams must surely have faded in the smoke which hung over Warsaw, and with them the belief that, after Germany's defeat, there would be no more obstacles to the introduction of the 'blessed peace' in Europe. The events in the Polish capital speeded up the recognition of the fact that the Allied Governments at this stage, thinking in terms of 'expediency' and the war with Japan, were in the full swing of power politics.

The events which had occurred and the news which came from the Warsaw rising, were beyond justification or possibility of understanding according to any Western standards. The Red troops' action — their bloody liquidation of the Polish Home Army, even while that Army was fighting against the Germans; the attack on General Bór, who was called a 'traitor' because he fought just as General Mikhaloyvich had been termed a 'traitor' because he did not fight (according to the Soviets), and the continued lack of assistance for Warsaw, could not be explained away as the conduct of genuine Allies.

History shows no precedent where a country, under strong pressure from its powerful Allies, placed half a million soldiers—the flower of the nation, trained and organised in the Underground, at the disposal of an army entering that country's territory. Nor has there been an instance

in the records of history where this Power, achieving the desired goal without a single guarantee, rewarded the action by exterminating the Underground Forces who came forward to help them. The Poles who had been able to fight against the Germans in the rear of their armies, found themselves unable to continue this struggle side by side with the Russians. "The Soviet soldiers seized these men," read the Polish communiqué, "who, only an hour before, had blown up German munition trains to safeguard those same Soviet soldiers from German fire." And these Soviet soldiers were killing, hanging, deporting the men or, at best, having deprived the remainder of their leaders, inserted them among the ranks of the Red Army. "What would the Russians have said," asked Alastair Forbes in the *Daily Mail* on October 2, "if General Eisenhower had deported the men of the Paris Maquis to St. Quentin and Sing-Sing?"

When the British Government, acting on the information of the Polish Government regarding the liquidation of their Home Army by the Soviets, brought their complaint to the notice of Moscow, the latter gave only an evasive explanation which was quoted by the Foreign Secretary in his reply to the question put on September 27, in the Commons by Sir Alfred Knox, who asked:

"If he is aware that members of the Polish Underground Army, who, acting under orders from the Polish Government, have co-operated with the Soviet forces in the liberation of their country, have been arrested and deported by the Soviet authorities in Tarnopol, the province of Lublin, and other districts; and if he will make representations on the subject to the Government of the U.S.S.R. in the general interest of Allied relations."

Mr. Eden: Yes, Sir. My attention has been drawn to the reports to which my hon. and gallant Friend refers, and I have brought them to the notice of the Soviet Government. The latter have now informed me that they do not consider that these reports give a true picture of events in the areas in question. They state that almost all Polish army detachments found in Poland when the Soviet armies advanced are now fighting beside the Russians against the Germans."

Sir. A. Knox: "Is it not true that several individuals have been arrested and deported because they refused to take the oath of allegiance to the so-called Committee of Liberation?"

Mr. Eden: "As I have said, as soon as these reports were brought to my notice, I brought them to the notice of the Soviet Government, as I thought it my duty to do. The House will understand that there is no matter which causes more concern to His Majesty's Government at this time than the relations between our Polish and our Russian Allies."

Earl Winterton (*Cons.*) Is it not a fact that my right hon. friend cannot be responsible for differences of opinion between our Allies, and that it is not for this House to say how they should be resolved?"

Mr. McGovern (*Ind. Lab.*). "Does the right hon. Gentleman think that there is anything to be gained by covering up the fact that an Ally of ours is both deporting and shooting Nationalists and Socialists in Poland?"

Mr. Eden: "The hon gentleman talks about covering up matters, but I must tell the House that, not only are these affairs of delicacy between Allies, but also that there is some difficulty in ascertaining the facts. Therefore,

we should treat these matters with caution and with reserve at the present time."

The Kremlin's answer that "almost all the detachments formed in Poland are now fighting alongside the Russians," referred to those men who had been forcibly pressed either into the Red Army or in the Soviet branch of the service nominally under control of the 'Lublin Committee.'

The tense atmosphere and confusion regarding the fighting in Warsaw and Poland was to increase in Britain. "The public so far have heard" complained Commander Bower in the House, "a great deal of rumour, very few facts and an absolute spate of extremely tendentious Communist propaganda." Therefore it was considered to be "necessary and desirable that a very full and frank statement should be made."

Indeed, by September 28, the British Prime Minister found it more than expedient to refer to Poland in his review of Britain's international policy:

"It would be affectation to pretend," Churchill began, "that the attitude of the British, and, I believe, the United States Governments towards Poland is identical with that of the Soviet Union Every allowance must be made for the different conditions of history and of geography which governs the relationship of the western democracies on the one hand and of the Soviet Government on the other towards the Polish nation. Marshal Stalin has repeatedly declared himself in favour of a strong, friendly Poland, sovereign and independent. In this, our great eastern ally is in the fullest accord with His Majesty's Government, and also, judging from American public statements, in the fullest accord with the United States. We in this island, and throughout our Empire, who drew the sword against mighty Germany, we who are the only great unconquered nation which declared war on Germany on account of her aggression against Poland—have sentiments and duties towards Poland which deeply stir the British Nation.* Everything in our power has been and will be done to achieve, both in the letter and in the spirit, the declared purposes towards Poland of the three great Allies.

"Territorial changes on the frontiers of Poland there will have to be. Russia has the right to our support in this matter, because it is Russian armies which alone can deliver Poland from the German talons, and, after all, the Russian people have suffered at the hand of Germany—they are entitled to safe frontiers and to have a friendly neighbour on their western flank All the more do I trust that the Soviet Government will make it possible for us to act unitedly with them in the solution of the Polish problem, and that we shall not witness the unhappy spectacle of rival Governments in Poland, one recognised by the Soviet Union and the other firmly adhered to by the Western Powers . . . It is my firm hope, and also my belief, that a

* *The Times*' report omitted the words "and duties" leaving only "sentiments" The sentiments of *The Times* seemed stronger than its sense of fair play. In those days of 1944 *The Times*, like the majority of the English press, no longer viewed the international situation objectively. With subservience to the Soviets came the ignoble belittlement of all those Allies who happened to be within the Russian's future sphere of influence The continued achievements of the Polish troops fighting in Italy, France and Holland went almost unmentioned in the English Press. For instance, when the Polish Armoured Division occupied Breda after fierce fighting, *The Times* reported that the credit for this action lay with British troops, and on the following day, attributed it to the American forces. Any tribute to Poland, even when it was expressed in Britain, was ignored by *The Times*, as for instance the speech on October 3rd made by Lord Cranbourne, Secretary for the Dominions.

good arrangement will be reached and that a united Polish Government will be brought into being which will command the confidence of the three Great Powers concerned, and will assure for Poland those conditions of strength, sovereignty and independence which we have all three proclaimed as our aim and our resolve . . .

" We recognise our special responsibilities towards Poland, and I am confident that I can trust the House not to engage in language which would make our task the harder. We must never lose sight of our prime and overwhelming duty—namely, to bring about the speediest possible destruction of the Nazi power. . . .

" I have every hope that wise and harmonious settlements will be made in confidence and amity between the Great Powers, and thus afford the foundations upon which to raise a lasting structure of European and world peace I say these words on the Polish situation, and I am sure that our friends on both sides will realise how long and anxious has been the study which the Cabinet have given to this matter, how constantly we see representatives of the Poles, how frequently and intimate our correspondence is with Russia on this subject.

" I cannot conceive that it is not possible to make a good solution whereby Russia gets the security which she is entitled to have, which I am resolved that we shall do our utmost to secure for her, on her western frontier, and, at the same time, the Polish nation have restored to them that national sovereignty and independence for which, across centuries of oppression and struggle, they have never ceased to strive "

The British Premier had enumerated the reasons why Russia could ' rightfully ' demand the annexation of half Poland. The first was that she " alone could deliver Poland from the German talons." And the second reason was that the " Russian people are entitled to safe frontiers," and the third, " that the Soviets had the right to have a friendly neighbour on their western flank."

These reasons, however, did not coincide with the ones which Moscow had put forward. The Kremlin had demanded Eastern Poland on many grounds, but above all on the basis of the former Tsarist aggression, i.e., on the grounds of having at one time gained those lands and held them for over a century, and also on the basis of the Soviet occupation of 1941.

Churchill, it was to be concluded, preferred to use different arguments, also from power politics. The reasons put by the Premier as to why a friendship should exist between these two nations (Poland and Russia) seemed unusual. " Is it enough to take from a nation half its country to make that nation experience an everlasting feeling of friendship towards the aggressor ? " asked the Polish Press.

It is necessary to recall that the Poles had freed themselves without help from Russia in 1918, and, furthermore, that when shortly afterwards the Bolsheviks endeavoured to flood Poland with their Red troops, it was actually this very same British Minister who had supported Poland's cause against the Soviets . . . In his Memorandum of June 26, 1920, Churchill had clearly presented to the Cabinet the existing danger—the danger for Europe and Britain.*

* Churchill, W. S., "*Aftermath*", p 267

"Are we looking ahead at all and making up our minds what we shall do if there is a complete Polish collapse and if Poland is over-run by the Bolshevik armies . . . Would it be the policy of the British Government to remain impassive in the face of such an event . . . In the event of the collapse of Poland, what reaction would this situation entail upon the German position? It would clearly not be possible to disarm Germany if her eastern frontiers were in contact with a Bolshevised area . . . "

The main point of Churchill's speech was " territorial changes on the frontiers of Poland there will have to be." In other words, the British Prime Minister again entirely supported Russia's aggressive demand, thereby completely ignoring the explicit clauses of the Anglo-Polish Treaty. And, the justification for this thrusting aside of England's commitments was taken from the arsenal of power politics. It can be logically assumed that, employing these reasons, Britain ought to have claimed " half France, Italy, Belgium and Holland, since, after all, she also had the right to be rewarded for her unique effort in the liberation of these countries," commented the World Press.

Churchill's speech was obviously made for the benefit of Moscow, otherwise it would be difficult to understand why it had been made at all. Ignoring the empty phraseology regarding a " strong, sovereign and independent Poland," after a pattern cut by Moscow, it merely proved to be a clearly expressed and unmasked consent to the partition of Poland, and more than that, of her insertion as a whole into the Russian political system. This was a new step in British policy. The submission of the remainder of Poland was to be camouflaged under Moscow's scheme of a " United Polish Government " having " the confidence of the three Great Powers concerned." It is difficult to visualise any ' protected ' Government who could possess the ' confidence ' of two democratic states, and a totalitarian one at the same time. Once in the past Poland had indeed possessed a similar government in the carcase of the state left to it by the Vienna Congress, a government which had had the confidence of Russia. This State known as ' Congress Poland,' had been united with Russia under the sceptre of the Tsar and, guaranteed by the other Powers, was only to benefit from this ' confidence' for a mere fifteen years, after which it was finally liquidated. One of those ' guarantors ' pressed to intervene in this destruction of Poland, had answered, " We have the right to intervene but we are not obliged to do so." The remark was made by the Prime Minister of Britain at that time—it was Lord Palmerston.

Such international guarantees given to the smaller countries have proved their worthlessness between the two great wars, and the present generation rated them at their true value. In the case of Poland, the promises of the British Premier appeared problematical, for in them could be read the renouncement of former pledges. He spoke only for Britain; Washington's attitude was one of complete indifference at the time. The question might be asked, was the Kremlin in agreement with Winston Churchill on this matter? Words have another interpretation in Moscow,

and it can be safely assumed that Russia would not acknowledge the promises and guarantee given by England. Furthermore, whatever order and government, having the ' confidence of the three Powers concerned,' was to be finally established in Poland, it would obviously be a government ordered by the Power most concerned—the one on the spot. Such a government (a projection of this Power and backed by its military forces), would have every opportunity of destroying the former state organisation and replacing it by the political system of its ' Protector.'

By the autumn of 1944, the deal between the Big Three at Teheran was no longer concealed. Churchill's attitude towards the Polish Government and his public speeches, beginning from February 22, 1944, were not only in support of the Russian territorial demands, but were also directed against the very existence of Poland itself. Never had the future of that country appeared so black. One of the leading Polish political writers, K. Mackiewicz, pointed out,

" the British policy towards Russia is based on an appeasement which is more fundamental than the Munich appeasement towards Germany . . ' The English do not wish the Russo-German antagonism to disappear, and that is the reason why they endeavour to ensure that these two countries have a common frontier for a line of friction. The further Russia advances westward the surer is Russo-German antagonism. The Anglo-Soviet friction in the Middle East, in China and even in the Baltic, is a further incentive which encourages the English to push the Russian frontier westward.

" In a system of this kind there is a place for Poland only in the Russian political orbit. Viewed in the light of these facts, Churchill's words regarding Poland ' achieving a friendship with Russia,' as the result of the annexation of her eastern provinces by the Soviets, can have no other meaning It is not a question of friendship, but merely that Russia should keep us within the sphere of her influence.

" . . . England has supported us, and now would also be willing to help us, for the English have much sympathy and gratitude towards us, but in the pattern of the policy which England has chosen to follow, there is nothing much she can do for us."

In this extract, it was evident that the Polish writer was heading towards the assumption that Churchill's policy was to accept for Poland that idea already so clearly expressed by Lloyd George in 1915, when the future of Poland was still in the air. He wrote in his memories (Vol. I, p. 881) :—

" If Germany were relieved of all fear of pressure from Russia, and were at liberty to turn her whole strength towards developing her western ambitions, France and Britain might be the sufferers, and I am not by any means confident that cutting off Russia from her western neighbours might not divert her interests towards the Far East to an extent which British statesmen could not view without some misgivings. The more Russia is made a European rather than an Asiatic Power, the better for everybody

" I therefore conclude that the solution of the Polish question which would best suit our interests would be the constitution of a Poland endowed with a large measure of autonomy, while remaining an integral part of the Russian Empire."

The above extract was written by Lloyd George when his acquaintanceship with the European and Polish problem was indeed comparatively new, when Germany was still a strong Power and there seemed little hope she would be defeated. A few years later, Lloyd George was to become a zealous defender of Poland's independence when this independence was to fall in line with the British interests. Quoting, for instance, his speech of 10th August, 1920 :—

" It is not merely that we are morally bound to interest ourselves in the life of a nation which is an ally and to which we have undertaken to give support in the event of its national existence being challenged. There is, in addition, the danger which is involved to the ' Peace of Europe ' if you have a great aggressive Soviet Empire conterminous with Germany. There are those who believe that the Soviet Republic is essentially a peaceful one. Let them believe it. But in spite of every effort to make peace, if the Soviet Republic rejects conferences for the purpose, if it postpones them, if it introduces conditions which involve a practical annexation of another country, then whatever the Soviet Republic was yesterday, to-day and to-morrow it will become an imperialist militarist Power "

In 1944, however, when Churchill was developing his thesis of a further westward Russian penetration into Europe, the fate of Germany was already sealed and even at that time a strong fear had sprung into being that the Russian intrusion would over-reach its limits. To endeavour to explain Churchill's policy, therefore, by the reasoning applied by Lloyd George in 1914-1915 seemed pointless—Churchill was bowing beneath the threat emanating from the Kremlin There was a remarkable similarity between his renouncement of the creed of a life-time, and the behaviour of the old Bolsheviks at the ' purge ' trials held in Moscow. The Russians sum up this attitude in one word, " pokayanye," a word which has no equivalent in any other language

The debate which followed the Prime Minister's speech of September 28, showed that there was no essential change in the House of Commons' attitude as far as Poland was concerned. The House, with the utmost discretion, followed the advice tendered by the Prime Minister that " intemperate language about Polish and Russian relations " can bring " embarrassment to (British) affairs and the possible injury to Polish fortunes," and that the " Hon. Members will take upon themselves a very great responsibility if they embroil themselves precipitately " in the controversy, and he expressed himself confident that " I can trust the House not to engage in language which would make our (the British Government's) task the harder."

Although the House dutifully abided by this advice, the Debate which followed revealed that Great Britain was still conscious of the obligations she had voluntarily assumed towards Poland and was, moreover, determined to see them through. As the Debate continued, it became increasingly obvious that a complete ignorance and misapprehension with regard to Russia and the affairs of Central Europe still existed among many

members in the House. The Honourable Members, people of the Western world, were judging, or desired to judge, the behaviour of the Soviet Government according to their own standards, and their references to Soviet magnanimity, their belief that Russia intended to ' free ' Poland, could only have met with the contemptuous laughter of Moscow. Whosoever spoke in the House of Commons could not and cannot have the slightest influence on any decision of the Kremlin. How naive to the ears of its war-lord must have sounded the avowal of one of these Honourable Members of the British Parliament, Price, when he declared that the methods of Russian diplomacy " are indirect and not always easy to understand," or that of Sir Headlam, when he complained " we are always being told that Russia is a democracy, and surely we can utilise with Russia the same methods that we adopt with other democracies." But what the Honourable Members failed to realise was that Soviet Russia recognised England, not as a democracy, but as the peak of capitalism with " aristocrats and plutocrats holding the reins "

That the ideas and hopes expressed in Britain's House of Commons were valueless in the Moscow State, was made evident on the very day when Churchill had called on the House to " restrain its views " and the House had duly praised the magnanimity of Russia. On that same day, September 28, the authorities of the Red Army, entering Bulgaria, ordered the British and American officers whom they found in Sofia to leave the country immediately. Thrown out from the territory occupied by their ally, they were obliged to cross into Turkey in order to seek the protection of their Ambassadors.

The most characteristic speech in favour of the Government's opinion was made by one of the permanent appeasers of the House of Commons, Quinton Hogg. He used kindly words about Poland. " We should seek to assert again and again," he said, " that it is our purpose and our hope to restore a free and independent Poland." But the whole gist of his subsequent remarks was that Britain could give no practical help to the Poles . . . " If we were to let them believe that we were able to do that which our geographical position, the political framework in which we have to live and our military resources, alike render impossible, we should, in fact, be committing that very dishonourable action of pretending that we were going to achieve for our friends more in fact than we were either disposed or able to do."

Those who were urging the fulfilment of the Anglo-Polish Treaty and accepted commitments, were, according to Hogg, violating " almost every cannon of British foreign policy over the last 300 years."

Captain Alan Graham seemed to be the only member to underline Britain's position as leader of the Western world. Graham emphatically pointed out that " the British cannot abdicate from their position as defenders of European civilisation " and " smaller nations," and that

" there can be no possible future peace for Europe, if genuine Polish independence was to be crushed directly or indirectly by Russia."

The most straightforward speech made in that debate came from Lord Dunglass, who spoke as 'man to man' in this fog of discretion and mystery into which the House had been drawn :—

" This matter between Poland and Russia cannot be left to be settled between the two countries without any intervention from ourselves. Not only from the wide point of view of the organisation of world peace has this matter to be looked at, for clearly it will be a test case of the relationship between a great Power and a weaker neighbour. Not only because we are the Allies of each of them, but also because, under Treaty, we have accepted not only definite legal, but moral, commitments to Poland. It is our habit to honour our treaties

" I remember very well the day when the guarantee was given to Poland by Mr. Chamberlain's Government At that time the British Government and the Polish Government were thinking in terms of the frontiers which held the field in the summer of 1939. At that time they were unchallenged by any other Power except Germany. I was glad to hear the Prime Minister mention this point because we owe it to ourselves to make it clear that, if it had not been for Russia's decision to partake in the partition of Poland, this country would have fulfilled that Treaty in the spirit and in the letter ; but equally we owe it to the Poles to recognise the situation as it is to-day That situation is fundamentally changed. No one in 1939 could have foreseen those changes. No one could have foreseen that Russia, from being a potential enemy would become our Ally, nor the stupendous Russian military effort, without which, I think it is admitted—so strong was Germany's strength in the field revealed to be—that Poland might never have been freed. No one could have foreseen that Russia, after her prodigious feat of arms, would determine to annex Polish territory in order to put the best possible strategic frontier between herself and the German people. Those things were not seen at that time. The question for this House, which had a real responsibility in the matter, is : Can we, in these new circumstances, fulfil our guarantee to Poland ?

" We must be absolutely frank and state the position as we see it to-day. To the Poles, I take it we should have to say that we cannot hope to restore the old Poland, and that our aim now must be to restore a Poland independent and free, and as nearly equivalent as possible in territory, economic resources and in international status to the Poland of 1939. If that is our intention and aim, the question inevitably follows whether, in view of the Russian attitude, we can make that independence and that freedom into a reality. If, after the defeat of Germany, this gallant but unhappy people are still left in bondage, and if this country has failed to do anything that we ought to have done or might have done, then our national conscience will be uneasy for generations.

" I believe we can succeed in this matter, but that success will elude us unless we realise two things The first is that Russia operates under a code of ethics which is by no means the same as our own. For that I am not blaming the Russians. They are at a different point on the historical road. Let me give examples When the British Government say : 'We will promise to restore an independent and free Poland,' they mean it in the unqualified sense of the words ; but when Marshal Stalin says, 'We will restore your independence and freedom,' he says, in the name of the Russian Government, to Poland . 'Yes, you may have your independence, but Russia will dictate your frontiers, and you may have your freedom, but

Russia will choose your Government and, by implication, will control your policy.' Those are two different interpretations and we must face them . . .

" The second thing which I think we have to realise in our political negotiations with Russia is that we must not shirk plain speaking . . . If a criticism lies against His Majesty's Government—and I do not know that it does—I believe it is that they have used a sense of delicacy in negotiation which simply is not understood by a people whose diplomatic methods are, by comparison, crude and direct. May I give an illustration or two ? . . . Let me take the House back to Teheran. Months before the Prime Minister, President Roosevelt and Stalin met at Teheran, Russo-Polish relations had been in a state of acute tension. An expectant world, after the Conference, received an impression of harmony. ' We are friends,' said the communique ' in fact, in spirit and in purpose,' and the reaction of the world to those words was not that this was an effervescent friendship such as naturally follows after good wine and good dinners, but was something more permanent.

" What was Marshal Stalin's reaction ? He went home, and, within a few weeks, there followed an ultimatum to Poland demanding territory, and declaring that this could not be, except for a few details, a matter of negotiation. It seems to me that this action is capable of only two interpretations; either Russia's reading of the Atlantic Charter is fundamentally different from our own, or Russia feels herself strong enough, when it suits her own purpose, to go her own way. I am putting those two possible interpretations and I cannot see any other. Did the Prime Minister or the Foreign Secretary tell Marshal Stalin at Teheran that this question of the method of conduct of relationships between Russia and Poland would be looked upon as a test case in this country, or did they not ? If they did not, then the mistake can be rectified. If they did, and in spite of it Marshal Stalin went his own way, it is time that this House knew about it in order that we might assess the implication . . .

" . . . One other illustration—and I shall cut these short because it is touchy ground. Many months ago, in the winter of last year, notice was given in the Moscow State-controlled Press, of the formation of a Union of Polish Patriots, a Committee of Poles to look after Polish interests, and it was perfectly clear at that time to anyone who understood the Russian technique that this was the first move towards undermining the authority of the Polish Government in London. Many weeks passed before the Foreign Secretary in this House, perfectly rightly, reiterated our support of the Polish Government. From that time on, the Soviet Government have known that both ourselves and the Americans recognise the Polish Government in London, but have refused to listen to our representations . . .

" Let me take this latest case. I am thinking of the support given to the Poles in Warsaw. We do not know the facts, but I think it is worth noting that very little account was taken by the Russian Government of the representations made in private, and it was only when public clamour reached such a stage in this country and America that it could not be stifled, that the Russians began to take notice and send in supplies. This is the dilemma which seems to me, all through this series of events, to face us. Either these incidents are a series of rebuffs from one great Ally to another, or there is genuine misunderstanding . . . "

Other relevant extracts from the Debate were :—

Mr. McGovern (*Ind. Labour*) : " Russia has a tremendous amount of good feeling in this country, which is just in the balance at this moment, and it will depend largely upon her attitude to her small neighbouring States

whether that good feeling is to be 'cashed-in on' by the Soviet in an amiable form, or turned to hatred of a great Power's effort against smaller countries. In relation to Poland, we must remember that, while it is fair to say, as the Noble Lord did, that Poland might never have been freed if it had not been for the military effort of Russia, it is also true to a large extent that, if it had not been for Russia and her pact with Germany, the whole Continent might never have been placed completely under the heel of Germany, and France might not have collapsed as she did in the military field."

Commander Sir Archibald Southby (*Conservative*): "This is no time for diplomatic casuistry. This is a time for plain and honest speaking between leaders and between nations and, above all, it is a time for adherence to the fundamental principles of justice and honour, no matter what such adherence may cost.

"I intend to confine myself in the main to the consideration of the affairs of Poland and of the three Baltic republics, Latvia, Estonia and Lithuania, so far as they concern us, because I believe our policy in respect of those States must colour the whole of our outlook as regards foreign affairs. It cannot be denied that not only Members of this House, but the general public outside, are seriously perturbed regarding the existing relationships between our two Allies, Russia and Poland, and between them and ourselves. It would, I think, be fair to assume three things. Firstly, that the British people consider that we went to war in the first instance to defend the independence of Poland; secondly, that Russia now desires to acquire by negotiation, if possible, but otherwise by *force majeure*, certain portions of Poland which she wants to add to Soviet territory, and, thirdly, that it has been generally thought that we were, in some way, letting Poland down.

"... Recent events in Warsaw have served to stimulate public interest in Polish affairs. On 1st August the heroic Poles rose against their German oppressors It has been most unfairly suggested in some quarters that the rising was premature and unauthorised, but the fact is that the local commanders acted in accordance with general instructions, which had been submitted both to President Roosevelt and to the Prime Minister, and the Polish Prime Minister has stated that, on 31st July this year, he also informed M. Molotov, the Russian Commissar for Foreign Affairs. Quite apart from that, for months past, both from the Soviet-sponsored wireless station, Kosciuszko, and in the broadcasts by the Union of Polish Patriots, appeals were being made for an armed revolt against the Germans in Poland, and attacks were being made on General Bor, who commands the Polish Army in Warsaw on the grounds of his alleged inactivity In June the Moscow radio said that it was generally believed that the time to strike had come ...

"... General Bór and his men went into action. Nobody could deny that the rising benefited the advancing Red Army, because it delayed the passage of German reinforcements on their way to the front Unfortunately, the Russian advance was held up by very heavy German resistance from at least three panzer divisions Surely one would have imagined that every effort would then have been made to assist the Poles in Warsaw. What they needed was arms, ammunition and food, and, yet in spite of frantic appeals from General Bór and from the Polish Prime Minister and Government in London, they were left to their own resources It was not until 15th or 16th August that bombers, manned by British, Polish and South African crews, who had to fly a round trip of 1,750 miles, and who lost 21 out of 100 bombers, brought some succour to our hard-pressed Allies in Warsaw. Since then, thank God, assistance has gone to Warsaw both from us, the Russians and Americans.

" Two questions demand an answer. First, we have been told repeatedly that Russia has virtual command of the air on the Eastern Front. Why, then, should General Bór have had to write on 5th August that German bombers were active and were operating with no interference from the Russian Air Force? Why were Russian machines not dropping the arms and ammunition that Warsaw needed. It may well be that other military considerations were of so urgent a nature that no Soviet machines could be spared, but, if that be true, then the second question arises. Why did our machines have to fly this immensely long flight instead of being allowed to use Russian airfields which must have been in reasonably close proximity to Warsaw? They were denied the right to land on Russian aerodromes until fairly recently.

The Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Mr. Eden): " I am sure that my hon and gallant Friend does not wish to put the case wrong and add to a difficult situation. There was never a question of our asking for facilities on Russian airfields. Our flights were done from Italy direct."

Sir A. Southby: " I, of course, accept my right hon. Friend's correction. I should have said United States' aircraft were refused the right to land . . . On 29th August the R A.F. did a 2,000-mile flight in bad weather in order to assist the Russian army by bombing the Baltic ports of Stettin and Koenigsberg, and the operation cost us 41 aircraft. If we could do this to help our Russian Ally, surely they could have found some machines to fly the infinitely shorter distance to Warsaw? "

After the fall of Warsaw, the British Prime Minister on October 5 paid tribute to the population of the capital and to that same Army, which, recognised by Britain and the United States, was steadily being exterminated by the Soviets :—

" I have a statement to make, I am sure that I am expressing the feelings of the House, as well as those of His Majesty's Government, in paying tribute to the heroic stand of the Polish Home Army and of the Polish civilian population at Warsaw. Their resistance to over-whelming odds under inconceivable conditions of hardship, came to an end on 3rd October, after a fight which had lasted 63 days. Despite all the efforts of the Soviet Army, the strong German positions on the Vistula could not be taken, and relief could not come in time. British, American, Polish and Soviet airmen did what they could to succour the Poles at Warsaw, but, although this sustained the Polish resistance beyond what would have seemed possible it could not turn the tide. In the battle for Warsaw, terrible damage has been inflicted upon that noble city, and its heroic population has under-gone sufferings and privations unsurpassed even among the miseries of this war.

" The final fall of Warsaw, at a time when Allied Armies are everywhere victorious, and when the final defeat of Germany is in sight, must come as a very bitter blow to all Poles. At such a moment I wish to express our respect to all those Poles who fell, fought or suffered at Warsaw and our sympathy with the Polish nation in this further grievous loss. Our confidence that the days of their tribulation are rapidly drawing to an end is unshakable. When the final Allied victory is achieved, the epic of Warsaw will not be forgotten. It will remain a deathless memory for the Poles, and for the friends of freedom all over the world."

The early days of October found the British Premier once again on a pilgrimage to Moscow. The Russians ignoring their assurances at Teheran that they would keep clear of that part of the Balkans predestined to be within the British sphere of influence, were pushing forward. The

Red Army had entered Bulgaria, meanwhile that protegé of Churchill's and the Soviet's, Marshal Tito, having exploited Britain to the extent of using her to undermine the throne of King Peter and the authority of his legal government, and to obtain the supplies which enabled him to overthrow Mikhaylovich, was now turning his back on his British protector. It was only to be anticipated that, in a short time, the Russians would stand firmly on the blue shores of the Adriatic and occupy a stand which would out-flank all that remained of Europe. The British position in the Mediterranean was steadily deteriorating, and Churchill under the pressing need to hamper this rapid march of Russian imperialism, had personally gone to the U.S.S.R. to, in the ambiguous language of diplomacy, "smooth over those controversies which, despite all his efforts, were arising between Britain and the Soviet Union"

To appease the Kremlin master and turn his eyes away from the Balkans, the sacrifice on the altar of the 'Unity of the Allies' was again to be Poland. Having once established the 'Lublin Committee,' Stalin was content to sit back and watch the British set about the task of extracting an unconditional surrender from the Polish Government. Churchill, of his own free-will, went to Moscow and with Stalin's agreement invited Mikolajczyk to join him in the Russian capital. Churchill was under the impression that the Polish Premier, having been subjected to continuous British pressure, would be in a ripe condition to readily follow his advice. He was right, but only up to a point, Mikolajczyk was indeed ready to go a long way, but there were limits beyond which, as the subsequent events were to show, he dare not trespass. The representatives of this 'Lublin Committee' were brought to Moscow at the "invitation" of the Kremlin, in order to witness Mikolajczyk's surrender. On October 13, the Polish Prime Minister was presented with the same demands as previously, i.e., the renouncement of the 'Fascist' Constitution of 1935, the creation of a united government, including the members of the 'Lublin Committee' and the recognition of the 'Ribbentrop-Molotov Line' as a definite frontier. The last demand was now put forward as the chief point at issue and only after having received that declaration would the Soviet Government be prepared to discuss the problem of Polish-Russian co-operation. Molotov declared in the presence of Churchill and Harriman, the Ambassador of the United States, that the Eastern Polish frontier along the 'Ribbentrop-Molotov Line' had been agreed upon with those Powers in Teheran.* Asked if they could deny this statement, Churchill

* *New York Times*, December 18th, 1944
After Mikolajczyk had arrived in Moscow he could have asserted that Ambassador Harriman had acted as a spectator in a court scene, where Stalin was acting as the judge and jury and Churchill as the Public Prosecutor It was mooted in diplomatic circles that Churchill had spoken in the name of Stalin and that it was he who had conducted all the talks in Moscow regarding the frontier question. When Mikolajczyk was appealing yet again for the Polish towns of Lwow and Wilno, Molotov — it was said — interrupted him· "Useless talk — all that has been settled in Teheran."

and Harriman remained silent. Acting as the advocate of the Soviets, Winston Churchill, in a series of five talks, and Eden in six, endeavoured to explain to the Poles that they would only be able to save one-half of the Polish Republic at the cost of the renouncement of the other half. And this remainder would be 'strong and independent,' but naturally under Russian control through the form of a 'friendly' government. In fact, Mikolajczyk was only asked one question, was he prepared to sign the new partition of Poland. 'Yes' or 'No'? The other problems were of no interest to Stalin, and he referred Mikolajczyk to the representatives of the 'Lublin Committee' for any discussion on those topics.

It transpired from the communiqué which they published, that the 'Lublin Committee' had also demanded the dismissal of President Raczkiewicz and that a new Government should be composed, half from the members of the 'Lublin Committee' and half from the 'Poles in London.'

There would indeed have been a great political stir had any of those nine Governments exiled in London endeavoured to contact or unite with its corresponding 'Lublin' Government functioning in the country concerned; had de Gaulle, for instance, come to terms with the 'Lublin' Vichy administration of Laval's, or M. Pierlot, the Belgian Prime Minister in London, with the Rexist leader, Degrelle, in Belgium, or the Norwegian Government with the 'Lublin' administration in Norway under Quisling. But the Polish Prime Minister had been requested, more, coerced, to come to some agreement and union with the 'Quisling Lublin' Government in Russian-occupied Poland. Mikolajczyk met the representatives of the 'Committee,' on October 16, and the conversation, according to the Soviet Statement, "facilitated the clarification of the respective points of view." The Polish Prime Minister had been prepared to negotiate within the terms of the aforementioned memorandum, which agreed to the acceptance of a temporary demarcation line between the Polish and Soviet administration, leaving Wilno and Lwów under Polish power, while the question of Poland's ultimate frontiers was to be decided at the Peace Conference, but he could not take it upon himself to renounce, in the name of the Polish people, Lwów and Wilno. He refused to be drawn into a discussion of the Constitutions, nor could he see his way clear to giving half the seats in the future Government to the Communists, a Party which, in the two former Polish Parliamentary elections, had gained no more than 0.40 per cent. of the total representation.*

The 'Lublin Committee' was brought very much to the fore in the subsequent parleys. Churchill, assisted by Harriman, spoke with its representatives, Bierut, Osubka and Zymierski, a move which could only be viewed in the light of a step towards the recognition of this 'Committee' as a partner of the Polish Government. Therefore, this

* There were two Polish Communist deputies elected to the Sejm (Parliament) of 1919 and 1922.

Soviet puppet, which Stalin had been willing to disband altogether had the Polish Prime Minister surrendered to the Soviet plans, was able to gain a certain amount of standing in the international arena.

The Polish Government's surrender seemed perhaps even more necessary to the British Government at the time than to Stalin. For the Russian dictator, such consent represented merely a question of propaganda value to the world, while, as far as Poland was concerned, unquestionably that consent, once given, would have automatically deprived the Polish Government in London of the support of the country. As regards Britain, it would follow that such a step would release that country from any formal obligations under the existing Treaty. Since the Polish Premier had no power to agree to the demands handed him by Moscow, he returned to London in search of further concessions from his Cabinet. His appraisal of the situation was not optimistic and he concluded his statement with the words : " They are waiting for the Polish Government to voluntarily commit suicide. The existing Polish Government and its Premier will take no such step, they have no intention of being the grave diggers for the sovereignty and independence of the Polish State."

Presenting himself as " the wandering minstrel travelling from court to court," the British Prime Minister gave a wordy version of his parleys in Moscow to the Commons on October 27. He was able to inform the House that never had relations between the two countries been more cordial and intimate. He explained that he had ' sung ' so well in Moscow he could now report that the tangled problems of the Balkans had been brought to an harmonious solution although, for the time being, this solution was both ' temporary ' and ' limited.' The general tone of the speech was one of intense satisfaction—except for the last subject touched on—Poland—which sounded like a warning of things to come :—

" The most urgent and burning question was, of course, that of Poland, and here again I speak words of hope, reinforced by confidence. To abandon hope in this matter would, indeed, be to surrender to despair. In this sphere there are two crucial issues. The first is the question of the eastern frontier of Poland with Russia, and the ' Curzon Line,' as it is called, and the new territories to be added to Poland in the North and in the West. That is the first issue.

" The second is the relation of the Polish Government with the Lublin National Liberation Committee. On these two points, apart from many subsidiary and ancillary points, we held a series of conferences with both parties. We saw them together and we saw them separately, and of course we were in constant discussion with the heads of the Soviet Government. I had several very long talks with Marshal Stalin, and the Foreign Secretary was every day working on these and cognate matters with M. Molotov. Two or three times we all four met together without anyone but the interpreters being present.

" I wish I could tell the House that we had reached a solution of this problem. It is certainly not for want of trying. I am quite sure, however, that we have got a great deal nearer to the solution of both. I hope that M. Mikolajczyk will soon return to Moscow, and it will be a great disappoint-

ment to all the sincere friends of Poland if a good arrangement cannot be made which will enable him to form a Polish Government on Polish soil—a Government recognised by all the great Powers concerned, and, indeed, by all those Governments of the United Nations which now recognise only the Polish Government in London

"Although I do not underrate the difficulties which remain, it is a comfort to feel that Britain and Soviet Russia, and I do not doubt, the United States, are all firmly agreed on the re-creation of a strong, free, independent, sovereign Poland, loyal to the allies and friendly to her great neighbour and liberator, Russia Speaking more particularly for His Majesty's Government, it is our persevering and constant aim that the Polish people, after their suffering and vicissitudes, shall find in Europe an abiding home and resting place which, though it may not entirely coincide or correspond with the pre-war frontier of Poland, will, nevertheless, be adequate for the needs of the Polish nation and not inferior in character and quality, taking the picture as a whole, to what they had previously possessed.

" These are critical days, and it would be a great pity if time were wasted in indecision or in protracted negotiations. If the Polish Government had taken the advice we tendered them at the beginning of this year, the additional complications produced by the formation of the Polish National Committee of Liberation at Lublin would not have arisen. Anything like a prolonged delay in the settlement can only have the effect of increasing the division between Poles in Poland and also of hampering the common action which the Poles, the Russians and the rest of the Allies are taking against Germany. Therefore, as I say, I hope that no time will be lost in continuing these discussions and pressing them to an effective conclusion."

Major Guy Lloyd (Conservative) asked whether it was still the Government's policy and wish, as previously expressed on several occasions, to defer decisions on all territorial and boundary questions between Russia and Poland until after the cessation of hostilities. Also whether the British Government were in general sympathy with the desire of the Polish Government for specific and joint guarantees from Great Britain and the other Great Powers, Russia and the United States of America, in support of Poland's continued independence and completely sovereign State after the war. Churchill replied :

" With regard to the first question, we should welcome a solution between the parties themselves, an agreement that would bring the whole matter to the peace conference in a form most helpful and favourable to all concerned, and also will tide us over the difficult and potentially tragic period through which we are passing.

" With regard to the guarantee of the three Great Powers, it is certainly to be hoped that the three Great Powers will guarantee the independent sovereign free Poland which will emerge from any arrangement which is made now and ratified at the Peace Conference. As far as the Soviet Government is concerned, I understand that that will be their fixed intention, and I have not hesitated to say that His Majesty's Government will certainly conform to, and themselves join in, such a guarantee It is not for me to speak of the affairs of the United States of America."

There was nothing new in the actual wording of the Prime Minister's speech, although its tone vibrated with the desire to settle the matter according to Moscow's wishes and as soon as possible. " The most urgent and burning question," " these are critical days "—time must not

be " wasted in indecision or in protracted negotiations," " a prolonged delay in the settlement can have the effect of increasing the division between the Poles in Poland," and also of " hampering the common action . . . against Germany." But who was ' hampering this action ' ? Did these sentences bring to light certain secret attempts in the talks between the ' Big Two ' in Moscow to bargain with Poland's future. Did these sentences confirm the rumour that Stalin was holding up his winter offensive until he received a definite British pledge to that end ?

But at this stage, when Stalin was still occupied with the Balkans, nothing which Churchill could say or promise the Kremlin in connection with Poland had any value, for nothing would have persuaded Stalin to renew a further offensive against Berlin until he had completed his intentions with regard to the Balkans. Churchill was urged forward by the powerful pressure of his fear for the Mediterranean and, since Stalin had decreed that the Polish problem must be settled before agreement could be reached on any other point, Churchill pressed Mikolajczyk to the wall, for "to abandon hope in this matter" (the settlement of the Polish problem) he pathetically exclaimed " would indeed be to surrender to despair."

Yet other problems of territorial demands, in relation to the main aggressors, Germany and Japan, had not been decided upon, and it had been agreed to leave such decisions until the post-war period. It was Poland alone who had to be partitioned in such haste in order not " to hamper the common action . . . against Germany." These " words were spoken in England on October 27, on the day when the dead in Warsaw were lying still unburied in its streets and when the ruins of the town were still smouldering . . . "

" The Kremlin has indeed exercised a fatal fascination for the statesmen who have gone on a pilgrimage to its shrine," sarcastically commented one of the Scottish political writers,* quoting an excerpt from G. K. Chesterton's poem, *The Crusader's Return from Captivity*. " I have come forth alive from the land of purple and poison and glamour, where the charm is strong as the torture being chosen to change the mind." " The torture . . . to change the mind " was applied constantly and strongly in this case until even such an experienced statesman as Churchill found himself bewildered and ' right-about-face ' on all the beliefs and creeds of his long life-time, and had begun to call black—white. The entire episode was without parallel in the annals of British statesmanship.

"And on what is founded this hope of the British Prime Minister," asked the Polish *Listy z Londynu* (London's Letters), Does he believe in the rightful settlement of the Polish problem, or only in the possibility of our surrender, which would mean that our Republic will be swamped by the waves of the Soviet ocean. Does he acknowledge this ' hope ' as a possibility ?

* Campbell, J., "*The Liquidation of Poland*," Glasgow, 1944

" Churchill utterances do not leave any doubts. He has expressed the conviction that the Polish Premier will soon return to Moscow. He has placed the Polish Government and the ' Lublin Committee ' on the same level as ' two parties.' He has remarked that a division already exists in Poland between the Poles and this can only increase. He has forgotten the unity of the Polish nation during five years of war and the recent Warsaw rising, which has once more shown who really governs in Poland.

" He is convinced that a new government should arise on Polish soil to be recognised by the Three Big Powers concerned, and combining members from the ' Lublin Committee.' But he is not concerned whether or not this Government will be recognised by the Polish people themselves, although he recognises the rights of the French and Greeks to establish their own governments without interference from the other Powers. The Poles must be given a government which Moscow thinks is fit for it.

" Regarding the territorial problem, Churchill *en passant* remarks briefly ' that it concerns the so-called Curzon Line ' and the new territories which will be added in the North and West. He showers many epithets on this ' Poland-to-be,' which is to be recreated as a ' strong, independent, sovereign' country. We are perfectly aware that Poland already exists, therefore, no need arises to ' recreate ' our country, just as no one is endeavouring to recreate France or Greece. The rest of the adjectives in the same sentence have an ironical ring, an emptiness or misrepresentation . . lies. Exception is taken to the sentence that, this ' new Poland ' should remain loyal to the Allies. We have no need for any lessons in loyalty—there can be no doubt regarding out faithfulness to our spoken word and our sense of justice.

" We execute in full every letter of our treaties. Friendship for our Liberator Russia ' is the theme of the propaganda issuing daily from Moscow. Friendship develops from the friendly attitude of both parties concerned, but to dictate this friendship is to imitate the Tsars, Suvorow and the Muscovite hangmen, ' the executors of the Polish people,' as Lenin had termed them.

" We learn from Churchill's speech that we will receive an ' abiding home ' Have we then been a nomadic tribe until now ? And the ' resting place ' ? Moscow will most certainly see that it is eternal Furthermore, we learn that it is to be a territory adequate ' for the needs of the Polish nation '—until now we have always understood that only the nation has the right to define its own needs—and that this territory will ' not be inferior in character and quality ' It means nothing else than that we shall be given much less than we already have Perhaps for 200,000 square'kilometres, some one-tenth of this ?

" The British Minister has declared in plain language that Poland should give up half her territory immediately—without further delay, without asking the Polish people. As the reward for this suicide, Poland would receive a bouquet of empty words."

The majority of the English Press, who were advising the Poles to continue their fight against Germany, but to give way before the aggression of the Soviets, soon made it clear that there could not be any question of a British guarantee of ' compensation ' for Poland, of any ' how and when ' but only the support of Britain to the Polish claims.

The British Prime Minister had once more demanded in plain terms an ' unconditional surrender ' of the Polish Government to Moscow. Such a move would be nothing less than the first application of this

famous formula, not to the enemy—but to one of the Allied nations. It was obvious that Churchill had abandoned all hopes of impressing the view of Britain and the United States upon the Soviet Government, namely, that Poland should be restored as a free and independent country without being deprived of any of her population or territory.

From the summer, 1942, the Polish Government in London became a source of embarrassment to the British Government. During 1940-1941, that Polish Government had been of the greatest value to Britain, for it had possessed the utmost moral credit in world opinion and a certain strength of armed forces, particularly as regards the Air Force, which had played such an essential role in the Battle of Britain (Polish names were to be inscribed along with British in the memorial chapel in Westminster to be erected in honour of ' The Few ') and its navy, whose share in the Battle of the Atlantic had been " out of proportion to its size," not to mention the land forces, whose renown had rung throughout the African, Italian and European campaigns. When Britain had developed her armies, and had decided at Teheran to change her European policy, the Polish Government merely became an embarrassing guest in London, a guest who had, it seemed, out-stayed his welcome. After Moscow had begun to turn the screws to its utmost capacity, London at length capitulated over the Polish question and began to wish the Polish Government, a source of continual annoyance to Moscow, had never existed. The statesmen of Downing Street had imposed pressure on the Polish Government in order to force it into placing the Underground Army at the disposal of the Soviets. When the latter replied by exterminating this Army, London limited its activities to forwarding the Polish Government's complaints to Moscow, and only recognised the Polish Home Army as an Allied Force through the sheer weight of public opinion. Despite the fact that this recognition had not the slightest influence on the Soviet's action of destroying that Army, Downing Street had nothing more to say.

As events developed, and with Moscow's increasing pressure, London was giving in more and more. The very existence of the Polish forces fighting alongside the British became a delicate problem for the Foreign Office, and Churchill in his previous speeches had repeated Moscow's plan, which aimed at uniting the Polish forces fighting with the British with those ' Polish ' forces created in Russia. To this end, Britain supported Moscow's attempt to disintegrate the Polish Army by compelling its Government to sack their Commander-in-Chief, General Sosnkowski. After the nomination of General Bór, whom, it was obvious, could not have left his command in Warsaw at that stage, the Poles were forced to leave the position of Commander-in-Chief vacant for the time being. Thus the Polish Army found itself without a Commander, a situation which was definitely opposed to the tradition of the Polish people and the Constitution of their State.

The Polish forces on the British war fronts in 1944 were to become a

diplomatic burden to Britain, and, anxious to appease Moscow, she was ready to agree to its transfer to Soviet command. Since the war was still in progress, the Polish Army was of a certain value to the British at the time and it can be judged how great must have been the pressure Russia exerted on London, if one of the leaders of Britain was reduced to saying angrily to the Polish Prime Minister when they had both been in Moscow together in that October, " Your Army ! Your Air Force ! Your Navy ! You can take them, we don't need them any more."

This idea of the creation of a united Polish Government with the aid of the participation of some sponsored committee, was the normal means by which Moscow sought to disrupt any political organisation by riding the Trojan horse of Communism. This method had been employed by the Comintern a few years before the war when they heralded the People's Front, and proved eminently successful in Spain and France, and it had also been applied at the appropriate stages during the destruction of the Baltic States. Now this idea instigated by Moscow was acclaimed by Winston S. Churchill as the *remede extraordinaire* for the Polish question, although there was not one political party in Poland willing to agree with this solution. Mikolajczyk, in his Memorandum of August, 1944, had visualised the possibility of allotting one-fifth of the seats in the new Cabinet (which would have to be created in Warsaw until the elections could be held) to the Communists. This concession, however, met with no support among the Poles, and there was a general sharp criticism that Mikolajczyk had over-stepped his rights. On the other hand, it was worthless to Moscow, who had previously demanded fifteen seats for their stooges and indicated those Poles in London who were to be nominated as the three members of this new Cabinet. At this stage, however, they were no longer eager to pursue the topic of any united government, well aware that the British Government would agree with any solution they chose to forward. And the British Premier in supporting Moscow's claims, was also fully aware that the Polish people would not tolerate any Soviet-sponsored Committee as their government, nor any government in which members of this ' Committee,' the highly specialised Russian Comintern officials and professional makers of revolution, would participate.

Outside Poland there were only two centres where the Poles could freely express their views, namely, in the United States and amongst the Polish Army in Great Britain, since military censorship was not concerned with the political expressions of the soldiers.* The Polish Army constituted ninety-two per cent of the Polish population within the British sphere, and the voice of these soldiers could be classified as the real expression of

* As has been related, the Polish Press and public opinion had effectively been muzzled by the limitations of the paper supply under the rules of the established Paper Control, and, in drastic cases, at the demand of the Soviet Embassy, by the suppression of certain out-spoken Polish newspapers.

the opinion of the Polish community. On October 3, the *Soldiers' Daily* in the Middle East, put the matter bluntly :—

" The situation is clear to us. A government in which would participate persons who had voluntarily become Soviet citizens, and who possessed Russian passports ; deserters who were sentenced by a legal Polish court—and every other member of this ' Lublin Committee ' who, by signing the agreement to the change-over of frontiers, and to the deportation of population, have, by this fact, committed high treason, and have broken our Constitution—such a government could not be recognised by any Pole and soldier, as a legal and constitutional government."

At the time when these words were written, the Polish troops, fighting on the Italian front, had approached the river Rubicon, a coincidence pointed out in the Polish Press, — the Polish Government urged by the British to agree to Moscow's demands, also found itself figuratively on the banks of that river. Churchill was endeavouring to placate the Soviets in his speech and convince them he was doing his utmost to execute Stalin's designs by striving to hand over Poland bound hand and foot . . . It appeared that the price of continued British support for the Polish Government was to be the latter's surrender of half its territory . . . failing this, came the threat to leave Poland to face aggression from the East . . . alone. But, in fact, British support for Poland had already ceased, London was openly siding with Russia. The help of Great Britain over the surrender of Polish territory to Russia was superfluous. Poland wanted Britain's fulfilment of the existing Anglo-Polish Treaty, i.e., the assistance necessary to enable her to preserve the integrity of her country and her independence—nothing more British sympathy and eventual polite regrets in the event of Poland's downfall, would only be of a relative political significance.

" His Majesty's Government," wrote *Nowy Swiat* in the United States, " cynically stated that they had, in fact, pledged themselves to defend Poland to the death, but only in the event of death appearing through the door on the right, when it came through the door on the left, His Majesty's Government—we hasten to emphasise, not the British people—made stubborn and determined efforts for two years, in order to induce the Poles to give up their independence and accept Russian authority."*

Britain had begun the war under the banners of democracy and as the defender of the smaller nations, although at the time she was relatively as weak as any of those nations she was defending. Due to the Battle of Poland and France, Britain was able to develop her own war-potential and to build her armies. In 1944, the face of the war was changing and, as Winston Churchill said, it had " become less ideological " and Britain limited her role of the defender of smaller nations to those who happened to be within the span of the British Isles and on the route through the Mediterranean.

* Matuszewski, I., "Pięć lat," (Five Years), *Nowy Swiat*, New York, September 4th, 1944

The needle of the British compass slowly swung round on the Russo-Polish question. The British Government, for reasons of propaganda and as a sop to public opinion, expressed words of sympathy to the Polish people, but were acting in accordance to the secret understanding with the Soviets—against the security of the Polish Republic From February 22nd, after Churchill had announced his Government's consent to the new partition of Poland (it meant the destruction of the Polish nation), the true position of the British Government could no longer be disguised. The complacency displayed by the Kremlin and the attitude of the English Press not only horrified Britain, where a " veritable cloud of fear and trembling had fallen " on the people, but also those friends of Britain across the water.

W. C. Bullit, former American Ambassador to Russia, in his correspondence from Italy, reported in *Life*, presented the feelings of the people of that country, feelings which were common to the whole of Europe. " Rome," wrote Bullit, " sees again approaching from the East a wave of conquerors. The talk of all men throughout Italy is the question : ' Will the result of this war be the subjugation of Europe by Moscow instead of Berlin ? ' They are afraid that the withdrawal of American and British Forces from the Continent will leave them at the mercy of the Soviets. And they judge the quality of that mercy by the Russians' treatment of the Poles."

The peoples of Europe saw in this treatment which Britain was meting out to Poland, her attempts to destroy the unity of the Polish Nation, the ominous signs of what was to be the ultimate fate of the Continent. The weak Britain of 1939 had had friends throughout this Continent, but the Britain of 1944, armed to the teeth, was fast losing her sympathisers, as her lack of the capacity and ability to hold down the leadership of Europe grew more and more apparent.

Britain was not bold enough to gather around her the nations willing to support her and in that union build the firm foundations for the establishment of a *Pax Britanica*, which would be synonymous to a *Pax Europea*. Instead, she had hesitated and, by bargaining with Russia over a portion of the Continent, had lost the first round ; after the Baltic States, Poland was to be the next victim.

There was a certain amount of fear among the Poles in Britain and America and within Poland itself that Mikolajczyk's Government might give in and agree to the signing of this new partition and enslavement of Poland.

" The Teheran Agreement," wrote *Listy z Londynu* (London's Letters) " has never been published, nor has our Government been notified. The Soviets, however, are referring to it, and stating that by it the ' Curzon Line,' (nothing less, in other words, than the ' Ribbentrop-Molotov Line ') has been established as Poland's frontier. Britain constantly advises us that this ' Line ' is ' just and reasonable ' and demands our consent to it. It appears

that this consent must be necessary for someone, if they are so constantly asking us for it, and if they are threatening us with dire consequences in the event of our refusal, if they are even giving us a time limit in which to state our agreement

" We have lost much in this war—our State, millions of our citizens and our capital We are left with our army rebuilt abroad, and with the commitments of our Treaties and our moral rights to our independence and our territory. Now they wish us to renounce even this much and for this renouncement of our rights we are to receive, not compensation, not guarantees, but merely promises of compensation and promises of guarantees. But even in the event of our consent, they will not acknowledge our right to a free life and rule in what is left of Poland, for there is no promise that our rightful Government will be allowed to return or that the Soviet's sponsored ' Lublin Committee ' will be dissolved by Moscow.

" We cannot gain by signing our death warrant, and we shall not lose by upholding those principles and slogans with which we decided to fight even after the military defeat of our country "

" It may well be that, as a result of this British bargaining with the Soviets over the Polish problem " wrote a well-known Polish scientist in a letter to Prime Minister Mikolajczyk, " that a section of the Polish people will be forced to seek for some means of survival in the frame of the Russian system. The possibility cannot be excluded that in such an event political groups might arise who would forward the programme of a Polish-Russian collaboration in an attempt to weaken the pressure of the Soviet police apparatus on the Polish population. History has already acknowledged the value of some of those so-called Quisling Governments which sprang up in practically every European country under German occupation It, therefore, cannot be excluded that, in an effort to save that section of Polish people now under Russian domination, perhaps in addition to a few traitors and common informers, some honest Polish Quislings, with the best of intentions might begin to collaborate with the Soviets But never could such Quislings be a Premier of Poland or members of our Government. The Government of Poland must be from that section of the Polish people who fight for their independence. The legal Government represents to the world a symbol of the Polish will for freedom—our will to belong to the Western civilisation. There are things greater than life itself and more abiding than the fluctuations of the international situation. The Polish people's deeds during this war have been witness to their attachments to the moral values. The President and the Government are the guardians of those values and they cannot relinquish them.

"A crime committed against Poland will remain an everlasting stain on the records of English history. The signature of the Polish Premier, the legal representative of the Polish State, will be necessary in order to absolve England should she commit such a crime. Because of this, the Polish Government cannot, and must not, give in . . . "

"*Time and Tide* observed that " The Polish soldiers, many of whom realise that, unless a miracle happens, they will never return to their homes, because those homes will no longer be Poland, are fighting meanwhile with undiminished gallantry and fighting furthermore in the Allied armies, on those sectors of the front where that fighting is most stubborn The names of Cassino, Falaise, Breda, Arnhem, give the guarantee that, at least, they will never be forgotten."

And even then, in spite of it all, the troops of the Polish Home Army still continued to fight in the rear of the Germans,while Britain, for reasons of military expediency, still supplied them with weapons by air. But this assistance was coming to an end, as it was disclosed in the House of Commons in the December of that year.

On the 24th of November, a change was made in the Polish Government. Premier Mikolajczyk resigned from his post. From the time he had first taken up office, particularly from that moment when the Red Army entered Poland in the early days of 1944, he had been subjected to pressure from the British Government, who had continuously urged him into an immediate acceptance of the Soviet's ultimatum. For the sake of the ' unity of the Allies ' he was importuned to come to an agreement with the Kremlin, to buy its friendship, ' at any cost.' Although Mikolajczyk gradually began to give in, and towards the end of his office had, in fact, in his concessions gone beyond the limits which he was allowed by the Constitution and the leaders of the Polish Underground, nevertheless, he was unable to satisfy the Soviets.

During Mikolajczyk's period of office, the next act of this Polish drama was the Warsaw rising, unsupported by the Allies, the tragedy of sovietisation once again, with its accompanying campaign of deportation undertaken by the Russians in the occupied part of Poland, and lastly, the establishment of the ' Lublin Committee.' In view of these facts, opposition to the policy of further concessions, directed under the ' sincere advice ' of the British Government, who, acting as Russia's lever, was prising away the integrity of the Polish Republic, began to grow amongst the Polish community.

On November 22, Mikolajczyk, after his meeting with Churchill, and confronted with the ultimatum which warned him of the dangers of a further negative and dilatory attitude, asked the representatives of the four main political parties whether or not they would be willing to go further in their concessions towards the U.S.S.R. and at the same time he presented them with a draft of a Note to Moscow which he hoped would help to solve the protracted dead-lock. He received a definite ' No ' . . The representatives of the parties declared that the readiness evinced by the Polish Government to make concessions and come to terms with Russia had hereto met with no tangible response or encouragement from Moscow. In their opinion, the U.S.S.R. had already decided to annex the whole area under dispute, to expel the Poles from it and to impose a puppet Government on what would be left of Poland From this aspect, the political role adopted by Mikolajczyk as Premier was no longer practical and he resigned.

The reasoning which had led Mikolajczyk to adopt a policy of giving in more and more to Russia (a policy which met no support even amongst his own party in Poland) might be described as follows :—

' The Eastern provinces of Poland are beyond saving. The Soviets are already in occupation and the British and Americans will not fight over the question of their restoration to Poland. Therefore, we must rescue what we can of our country.

' Russia is greatly devastated and is not in a position to rebuild herself without asking for the industrial help of the United States and Britain. She will undoubtedly have to pay for this help by political concessions in Europe and Asia, and therein lies the margin whereby, if not the sovereignty and freedom of Poland can be saved, at least, the biological extermination of the Polish people by the Soviets might be delayed. In the meantime, this action was progressing so rapidly, by the killing and deportations, that it is vital to give way to Moscow's demands in order that the Polish race gain some respite. By renouncing the Eastern half of Poland, it will still be possible to receive a guarantee from the Allies regarding the Western remnant of the State '

To this future Poland, Britain was willing to give a guarantee it is true, but only a guarantee equal to that offered by Russia, and as the latter had in mind a ' free ' Poland in the Soviet meaning of this word, then similarly, Britain's guarantee in this case could mean just nothing—for nought plus nought will always equal nought . . .

Roosevelt explained America's position clearly, by stating (in the letter handed by the United States' Ambassador in Moscow, Averill Harriman, to the Polish Prime Minister on November 23) that the administration of the United States was constitutionally unable and traditionally unwilling to guarantee any particular country or frontier It was ready, however, to try for the last time to persuade Marshal Stalin that the area of Lwów and Drohobycz (the oil area) should be left to Poland. As to the Polish-German frontier, it would not oppose any arrangement which Poland and the U.S.S.R and Great Britain might be able to reach in this respect.

Already a fortnight previously, Roosevelt had spoken with the representatives of the Congress of American Poles, who had declared that Poland could not agree to the Stalin-Churchill plan of recompensing this country for the loss of her Eastern territories, " for it would be like Canada taking the states of New England, including New York, and wanting to give in return to the United States, Maryland." They asked the President whether he was ready to " demand and defend the independence and territorial integrity of Poland," and to give a straightforward answer.* In the Statement issued by the White House on October 12, the

* It was still unknown at this juncture whether Roosevelt had undertaken any obligations towards Russia regarding Poland Dewey, the rival candidate for the Presidency, had said in his speech on October 18th, 1944, that Roosevelt "undertook to handle this matter (Poland) personally and secretly with Mr Stalin (in Teheran)" "At their only meeting," Dewey continued, "neither our Secretary of State, nor the Under-Secretary was present Instead Mr. Roosevelt took along Mr Harry Hopkins, who acquired his training in foreign affairs running the W P.A."

President affirmed that " Poland must be reconstituted as a great nation . . . as a representative and a peace-loving nation . . . one of the bulwarks of the structure upon which we hope to build a permanent peace "

As Mikolajczyk had rightly surmised, neither Great Britain nor America would go to war in order to keep Lwów and Wilno for Poland, and it was also doubtful whether they would be prepared to safeguard the independence of the remainder.

The example of Warsaw had an ominous meaning. And now, once again, the Atlantic Democracies were repeating with empty phrases that their desire was to guarantee Poland, but the scope of this desire proved more modest than in 1939 . . . Thus Mikolajczyk's reasoning was to crumple into dust when it came in contact with reality.

The newly-formed Government under Thomas Arciszewski had taken office against the desire of the Two Powers, Britain and Russia, then busily engaged in a tug-of-war over Poland. Arciszewski's Cabinet fully represented his fighting country and was determined to challenge all comers to the last stand—' no more concessions, the stock of concessions have run out.' The newly-formed Government was cold-shouldered by 10 Downing Street, and met with a most violent torrent of abuse from Moscow. As one of the leaders of the Underground, the new Premier had directed the struggle inside Poland against the invader for the past five years and had been urgently ' wanted ' by the Gestapo, as well as being the most sought-after man by the N.K.V.D. until the summer of 1941. Arciszewski was a Socialist of long standing and had been a renowned figure in the fight for Poland's freedom under the Tsarist régime. When the Home Political Representation had decided in the summer of 1944 that it would be desirable to separate the appointment of President of the Republic from the function of the C.-in-C. (then combined under Sosnkowski) Arciszewski had been chosen as the successor to the post of President. He was brought to England in the July of that year by a plane piloted by a New Zealander (Flight Lieutenant S. G. Culliford) who landed near Tarnów in Southern Poland, where the new Prime Minister was waiting—incidentally, Arciszewski brought with him the plans of the German missiles V.1 and V.2, which had been captured by the Polish Home Army.

The new Government, like the former, was based on the three main parties (with the exception that, instead of the Peasants, the National Democrats had taken office), and was backed to the fullest possible extent by all the elements taking part in the Underground. The London group of the Peasant Party (which still had one Minister inside Poland) issued the statement the day after the formation of the Cabinet that, although they were not participating for the time being in the Cabinet, they were giving their " full support to the legal Polish Government in its arduous struggle in the defence of the interests of Poland and of the Polish people."

The newly-appointed Prime Minister explained his Government's programme in the broadcast to his homeland on December 7, and in his speech at the meeting of the National Council in London :—

" . . In the first years of occupation, we had to face not only the disasters of our own country, but also the crushing might of the enemy and often the misfortunes of our Allies. The enemy who occupied our country aimed at our biological extermination, murdering thousands and millions of Polish citizens or confining them in concentration camps But despite all this, we endured, we grew in strength, and we built up the framework of our Underground State and our Home Army, until at last we became a power which could exert a successful influence on conditions in Poland . .

" Perhaps never before in the history of the Polish nation have those who direct its policy faced a situation so difficult and laden with consequences as we do to-day It is not only the independence of our State but also the very existence of our nation which are in the balance Poland is not only a coloured spot on the map, not only a group of people speaking the same language, and not only a state organisation registered in international treaties She is a clearly defined factor in European civilisation and culture Ten centuries of unbroken historical continuity, and the work and struggle of over thirty generations have gone to make up the essence of what we mean when we say—Polish That quality which had made the Poles the champions of freedom and democracy can endure and develop to the benefit of its own people and others only in independence, or, if it is menaced, in all the forms of struggle open to it . . .

" Owing to reasons for which we are not responsible, Poland, that first and most loyal Ally amongst the United Nations, has found herself in a very difficult situation. Our record is so clean in this war that we may be presented to all as a model of loyalty, and devotion to the common cause. We have kept our word . . We have made immense contributions (discounting bloodshed and sacrifices) to the Allies' struggle against German aggression both in the military field and in our resistance to the invader occupying our land We held up the attacking German war-machine for eight months. Over five million Polish citizens have lost their lives as a result of military operations and the terror raging during the occupation We are fighting Germany on all fronts in this greatest of world wars, and we are resisting without cessation in Poland itself. The best testimony to this is the Warsaw rising, which broke out in August this year. It lasted sixty-three days and was one of the most magnificent fights for freedom which this war, and the history of the world, has ever seen .

" There may be differences of opinion as to reality , one may allow oneself to be influenced by suggestions that material strength alone is the determining test of reality But to us, that essential genuine will of the Polish nation which speaks to us to-day even from under the ruins and ashes of Warsaw, is also a reality. We hear this voice of our country, as the world heard it when our fighting capital shook the world's conscience to its depths. For all those two long months of the battle in Warsaw, no-one could conceal the fact that Poland was really fighting with self-sacrifice for her freedom and for the freedom of the world . . . Our principal goal is, we consider, to preserve and bequeath to our nation the independent Polish State . .

" We wish to reach this goal in joint endeavour with our Allies, by the total defeat of Germany, against whom we have fought since 1939 in Poland and on all the Allied fronts, and by an honest understanding with Russia. Our next aim we consider to be the reconstruction of Poland from her ruins to a new life, based on full political democracy and on just social foundations,

a Poland capable of full spiritual and economic creativeness

" . . . The Government will take as a basis for its activities the Act of Agreement between the Four Parties in Poland dated August 15th, 1943, and the Declaration of the Council of National Unity of March, 1944. We shall take the directives in these two acts as general lines on which to work, filling them out as much as possible. In this way the programme of Underground Poland which was drawn up in such difficult conditions, will be carried out most faithfully as the dictate of the national conscience.

" . . . Apart from the strengthening of our alliance and friendships, the most important task to be solved by the Government is that of clarifying and settling our relations with our Eastern neighbour. After a period, 1939-41, which was so difficult and painful for us, the late General Sikorski took the initiative in this aim. From that time on, it has been the constant care of the Government to endeavour to normalise the Polish-Soviet relations

" The Government which I have the honour to head stands sincerely for an understanding with the Soviet Union. The Government wishes to do all in its power to continue the efforts made by the previous Governments to reach such an agreement as can constitute a guarantee of a genuinely friendly and lasting settlement between our two neighbouring States. This understanding must be based on respect for the rights and vital interests of both sides. It must also be an understanding which will not evoke feelings of wrong and injustice in the Polish nation . . .

" From the time when Poland was invaded by the armies of the aggressor, the Polish Government decided irrevocably to continue the war against Germany together with our Allies and with all the strength still possessed by our nation. This decision was and is the expression of the nation's united will Its proof is the readiness with which even now tens of thousands of Poles enter the fight for liberation in the ranks of our armed forces, unhesitatingly springing to action at every call by the lawful authorities of the Republic

" While I am speaking of the Polish Armed Forces, I must give first place to that part which fights in the most difficult conditions and bears the greatest sacrifices—the heroic Home Army. The Home Army arose out of the Underground and has passed over to open fighting on a large scale, which reached its peak in the Battle of Warsaw.

" During these operations, the Home Army has created many divisions. Striking simultaneously with the Soviet offensive throughout those parts of Polish territory involved in military operations, it won a series of victories in Volyn, in the Wilno district, in the Lublin area, and later round Kielce and Radom. For the first time, Polish forces have co-operated with Soviet forces in the common fight against the common enemy. Thereby, the Home Army has given a great opportunity to our eastern neighbour to put our mutual relations on entirely new lines of friendship and brotherhood-in-arms. Up to now, this opportunity has, unfortunately, been missed. We are convinced that this has been of harm to the interests of both Poland and Russia.

" The fall of Warsaw hit our Home Army hard But it must be emphasised that it did not terminate this Army's existence nor put an end to its activities. The Home Army lives and fights on, and in the further progress of the war against Germany on our territory, constitutes an element which must be seriously reckoned with

" I now come to the armed forces abroad. Their services during this last year have given us a share in the victories of the Allied armies of liberation in Italy and the West of Europe. Our forces . . animated by a spirit of self-sacrifice and desire for revenge, have in these great events played a part immeasurably greater than one would suppose from their numerical

strength. It is no exaggeration to say that they influenced the course of several decisive operations . . . As to the navy, merchant marine and air force, it is enough to say that their honourable, everyday service for the last five years has been continued in the invasions with exceptional intensity and with considerable effect.

" . . A large number of statute laws are under preparation by the Government. All these drafts are submitted to the Home Country for its approval. They have in common an honest desire to lay solid democratic foundations under the new Republic, whose slogan ought to be—free men in a free country.

" Democracy requires not only a sovereign Parliament, but also the free expression of public opinion. To secure this freedom, the new press law now debated in the National Council, is based on the principle of the complete freedom of the Press. With the same end in view the new Bill about popular meetings provides for the complete freedom of meetings which are to be free from all administrative supervision. Again the Bill regarding the right of association, guarantees to the citizens complete freedom of union and coalition . . .

" I should like to devote some attention to our plans for the social and economic reconstruction after the war. As I have said, in this field we shall take our cue from the declarations which have been made by our Underground Organisation at home with regard to these matters Those declarations demand the raising of the economic potential of Poland, the disappearance of social inequalities, the re-distribution of land property and bringing it within the reach of everyone and, finally, the raising of the National Income and its just distribution

" The State will direct and control the chief industries and embark upon a programme of planned economy. Some industries will be nationalised, while the whole national economy will be carried out according to plan No other policy is possible after the frightful devastation to which our country has been subjected and after its ruthless exploitation during so many years of enemy occupation. Nevertheless, the State will encourage private initiative in founding new works, be they industrial, commercial or crafts The State will encourage and support the co-operative movement A thorough reconstruction of agriculture must take place, on the basis of increasing the number of agricultural holdings and enlarging dwarf holdings

"Another important task of the Polish State will be to raise the level of culture and education, the reconstruction of educational facilities and cultural institutions destroyed by the occupying Power and the placing of education and knowledge within reach of the masses.

" This has been a faithful commentary of the essentials of the programme harmoniously worked out by the four parties represented on the Council of National Unity in Poland We do not intend to regard this programme as a mere ornament, for us it will be a practical injunction for our daily Government and work . Here, I should like to stress once more the hard work and sacrificial efforts of our authorities and offices at home in forming a Polish administration amidst the most difficult conditions under the invader

" I should also like to stress that national minorities in Poland will have full, equal rights. In particular, the Government will take great care of its citizens of Jewish nationality, who have suffered the greatest and most grievous losses in the struggle against the occupying forces and who know not only how to suffer, but also how to fight the Germans, as for instance in the defence of the Warsaw ghetto in 1943 . . My Government declares, as it has declared on more than one occasion, that all German anti-Jewish regulations in Poland are illegal and not binding The Government will

make every effort to right the wrongs done to Jews by the German barbarians and to restore a situation which would be in accordance with the traditions of Polish tolerance.

" When the storms of war will be over and the world will again face the great problem of re-organisation of national life on a basis of international co-operation and respect for the right of nations, a new world organisation will have to be set up to express real international solidarity and secure a better morrow for the world in which mankind will be free from want and fear.

" It would be a grievous mistake to underestimate the importance of those States whose value for international co-operation results less from their material resources than from their spiritual worth The Polish Government wishes to take a part in the new international expression, based on freedom, solidarity and brotherhood . "

The programme of this new Government was the programme of fighting Poland, so clearly expressed in General Bór's cable: " Poland has not fought for five years against Germany under the most adverse conditions, and has not suffered the most terrible losses in order to capitulate to Russia."

The trend of the Polish Press at this difficult time was to take a long-term view of the Russo-Polish problem which was dominating the entangled international situation The idea of surrender was out of the question to the people who now stood, with that indomitable will and singleness of purpose shewn by the Polish people in their struggle, at the head of the Government. The tragedy of Warsaw, which had on the whole been so lightly dismissed by the Allied Governments, the spectacle of this great sacrifice haunted the minds of the Polish community. " Mikolajczyk resigned because he had lost his faith in the promises and guarantees of the British and United States' Governments," wrote one of the Polish periodicals, " but the Poles did not lose faith in the British and American peoples, whose sons were not fighting the German aggression and making the supreme sacrifice in order that Russia's greed should be consummated. It is unthinkable that Poland, in spite of her enormous contributions towards winning this war, should be sacrificed to temporarily satisfy Russian imperialism."

" Two days before the formation of Arciszewski's Government," wrote New York's *Tygodnik Polski* (Polish Weekly) " there seemed to be in the atmosphere of Polish politics the feeling that the Great Powers were deciding Poland's fate and that the only way to better our situation is a ceaseless stream of concessions and obedience towards our Allies.

" To-day we know—the partition of Poland will not be signed by the Poles . . . we will not capitulate . . . Our Allies must understand that they cannot propose that we should make concessions for which we receive nothing, and without consulting us, as if we were vanquished. The new Polish Government has been created while the greatest pressure was being exerted on Poland in an effort to make her agree to surrender—and it has been created with the one object of testifying that Poland does not intend to surrender.

" The change in London indicates a true revolution, the Polish people have regained their voice . . .

"Arciszewski's Government has come into being not to beg, but to fight for the integrity and independence of the country . . . its programme is the programme of the Polish people, and it has the same will to fight to the end as the people and the Army are fighting."

Churchill, realising all the implications behind this change in the Polish Government, and the determination expressed by its formation, made no attempt to contact it. The long exerted pressure on the previous Polish Governments had proved useless, and the objective (to get the Poles to voluntarily surrender) had not been achieved. It seemed that the victim had managed to slip from the trap. The British Prime Minister's reference to the Polish Government in the House of Commons was accompanied by criticism, while the British Press did not have a good word to say for it. And from that time, Churchill, ignoring the Polish Government, sought the opportunity and the means to create another one, more compliant with the British Foreign Office. To this end, he did not hesitate to approach any politician among the Polish circles who stood in opposition to the existing Government. " It was enough for one of the former Polish Ministers to publicly announce his disapproval of the policy of his Government, and Churchill two days later found one hour in which to confer with him, although he could not in two months find time to approach the Polish Government," commented *Polish Thought.*

BRITAIN'S HONOUR

I ask your pity—for I am afraid
To meet your thoughts, my friend, my steadfast friend,
Who stood when others shrank from us and failed,
Who stood—and to this end!

I ask your pity shame is hard to bear,
What we have bought is paid at bitter cost
You—serf or exile—yet may keep your pride
And cry, as once the broken Valois cried,
That all is lost save—that which we have lost'
(Cicely Hamilton, " To Any Pole," *The Weekly Review,*
December 21, 1944).

For some months, Churchill's Government was unwilling to publicly discuss the Polish problem, but finally the pressure exerted by Moscow on the Poles through the medium of the British, together with the determined attitude of the Poles, brought the whole question into the open. The explanations of the British Government up till then had been evasive and ambiguous, and Downing Street made every effort to convince the House of Commons and the Press that any disclosure of the reality of the situation in Eastern and Central Europe, particularly of Moscow's action

against Poland, and their behaviour in the occupied part of that country, the extermination of the Polish Home Army, and the ' purge ' which they had undertaken, would be most harmful to Poland's cause. The Polish question had become taboo in Britain or, rather, one aspect of it—namely, the trampling underfoot of Poland's rights and Britain's continual agreement to the increasing Soviet demands. Not immediately, but only five weeks after the bargain made at Teheran on February 6, 1944, did Churchill inform the Polish Premier of this . . . He was to repeat in the Commons on the 22nd that the British Government had decided to support the Russians in their territorial demands for the ' Curzon Line,' nothing less, therefore, than the equivalent to the tearing-up of the Anglo-Polish Treaty of 1939. "Any new undertaking," had run section three, Article 6, of that Treaty, " which the Contracting Parties may enter into in the future, shall neither limit their obligations under the present Agreement nor indirectly create new obligations between the Contracting Party not participating in these undertakings and the third State concerned."

The characteristics of Russian imperialism has always been to disguise the most iniquitous of deeds under the cloak of legality. Each attempt to deprive Poland of her territory or to extinguish her independence had been represented as something undertaken in the interest of the Polish people themselves. Catherine the Second had declared that she was resolved to allow Poland " the means of procuring, without prejudice to her liberty, a well-ordained and active form of government, of maintaining herself in the active enjoyment of the same . . . " The Tsarina had been eager to preserve Poland " from the dreadful consequences of internal division " and to " rescue her from utter ruin," but she had endeavoured to persuade the Polish Parliament to vote for the cession of part of their country to Russia. In 1793, the Russian troops had encircled the Polish Parliament with this objective in view and directed their guns on the building and then—the Act of the Second Partition was read before a completely silent audience. That Parliament is known in history as the ' Dumb Parliament.' The Soviets endeavoured to give a similar appearance of legality to all their annexations—the farce of the ' plebiscites ' in the Baltic States and Eastern Poland was a convincing example of this peculiarity

Nineteen forty-four was spent in endeavouring, through the medium of the British, to gain this ' legality ' by extracting an agreement to Moscow's designs from the Polish Government. Churchill had no wish to appear as an accomplice in the partition of the country of an ally and this formal consent would at the same time relieve the conscience of Britain. The Prime Minister therefore became the zealous advocate of Russia's scheme.

Moscow, still awaiting the surrender of the Poles, held up their announcement and recognition of its rival governmental body for Poland.

In the meantime, however, the sponsored 'Lublin Committee' was fulfilling its administrative role in that part of Poland 'liberated' by the Red Army. The intended complete annexation was still disguised under the cloak of a 'friendly government.' It was more or less universally understood by this time what the term meant, but its interpretation by the British Prime Minister is interesting to observe. An example of his opinion on this subject can be found in his remark in 1938 on the Japanese attempt to enforce a body of this type on China. Churchill had written with stinging irony · " They are resolved to maintain the integrity and independence of China. All they want is to have a Chinese Government which will live with them on neighbourly terms, and not leave undone the things they like or do anything they do not like. Merely that . . . "

Therefore, all parties concerned, Russian, Polish, and the British as well, understood in full the significance of Moscow's demands, and that their aim was to insert the Polish Republic in its entirety within the orbit of the Soviet Union. With the introduction of Arciszewski as the Prime Minister on 29th November, 1944, Moscow was finally obliged to recognise its inability to over-ride the Polish Government. At this time, the Red Army was putting the finishing touches to its preparations for the winter offensive, and the Kremlin used the opportunity to force London to clarify its position regarding the Polish problem and, moreover, to give a suitable guarantee concerning their intentions towards the future of this country The fate of the other States in the Middle Zone (particularly the Baltic States) had already been decided in Russia's favour; the voices of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania, submerged under the surging Soviet waves, could no longer be heard—the Red Army and the N.K V.D had effectively reduced them to silence.

In the middle of December, Churchill announced his intention of making a new statement on Poland, and, without any apparent need, to hold a debate. It was a move which aroused a general curiosity, contrary as it was to the attitude of secrecy on the matter upheld heretofore. There can only be surmises as to why Churchill took such a step—Russian pressure, or an endeavour to acquaint the British people in some measure of the action which the Government contemplated in the near future.

Thus, on 15th December Churchill said :—

" In opening this Debate, I find myself in a position to read to the House again some extracts from the carefully considered statements that I made to them in February, after I had returned from Teheran, and also in October of the present year. I rely upon those statements, and when I read them over again last night in preparation for this Debate, I found it very difficult to improve upon them or alter them in any way. This may accuse me of infertility of mind, but it also gives me some confidence that I have not misled the House or felt myself stultified, in all respects at any rate, by the harsh and unforeseeable movement of events. It is not often that one wishes to repeat what one said two months ago, and still less ten months ago, but I propose to do so, because in no other way and in no other words that

I can think of can I remind the House and bring home to them the grim, bare bones of the Polish problem."

The Prime Minister then read his Statements of 22nd February and 27th October, regarding the Agreement with Marshal Stalin in Teheran and the subsequent negotiations in Moscow and continued :

" The hopes which I thought it proper, and indeed necessary, to express in October, have failed. When Mr. Mikolajczyk left Moscow, my hope was that he would return within a week or so with the authority of the Polish Government in London, to agree about the Polish frontiers on the basis of the Curzon Line and its prolongation to the southward called ' the Curzon Line A,' which comprises, on the Russian side, the city of Lwow I have several times drawn Mr. Mikolajczyk's attention to the dangers of delay. Had he been able to return after the very friendly conversations which passed between him and Marshal Stalin, and also the conversations which he had with the Lublin National Liberation Committee , had he been able to return, with the assent of his colleagues, I believe that the difficulties inherent in the forming of a Polish Government in harmony with the Lublin Committee, might well have been overcome In that case he would be at this moment at the head of a Polish Government, on Polish soil, recognised by all the United Nations, and awaiting the advance of the Russian armies moving farther into Poland as the country was delivered from the Germans. He would also be assured in his task of the friendship and help of Marshal Stalin Thus he could at every stage have established a good relationship between the Polish underground movement and the advancing Russians, and a Polish administration would have been set up by him in the newly delivered regions as they expanded

" I have the greatest respect for M Mikolajczyk, and for his able colleagues who joined us at Moscow, Mr Romer and Mr Grabski I am sure they are more qualified to fill the place of the late General Sikorski than any other of the Polish leaders. After endless discussions, into some of which we were drawn, on Mr. Mikolajczyk's return from Moscow the Poles utterly failed to obtain agreement. In consequence, on 24th November, Mr. Mikolajczyk, Mr Romer and a number of other Polish Ministers,* resigned from the Polish Government, which has been almost entirely reconstituted in a form which in some respects I certainly am not able to applaud Mr. Mikolajczyk and his friends remain, in the view of His Majesty's Government, the only light which burns for Poland in the immediate future.

" Just as I said that, if the Polish Government had agreed, in the early part of this year, upon the frontier, there would never have been any Lublin Committee to which Soviet Russia had committed herself, so I now say that if Mr. Mikolajczyk could have swiftly returned to Moscow early in November, as he hoped and expected to do, with the power to conclude an agreement on the frontier line, Poland might now have taken her full place in the ranks of the nations contending against Germany, and would have had the full support and friendship of Marshal Stalin and the Soviet Government. That opportunity, too, has been, for the time being, suspended This prospect has vanished like the last ' One is reminded of the story of the Sybilline books, in which on every occasion the price remained the same and the number of volumes decreased, until at last they had had to be bought on the most unfavourable terms. Mr. Mikolajczyk's ordeal has been a most severe and painful one. Torn between the love of his country and the intense

* The Polish Prime Minister, Mikolajczyk, resigned in the normal way together with his Cabinet, and there never was, in fact, a resignation of a certain " number " of Ministers only.

desire to reach a settlement with her mighty neighbour, which was most abhorrent to many of his fellow-countrymen, confronted with the obstinate and inflexible resistance of his London colleagues, whose veto was like the former Liberum Veto*, which played so great a part in the ruin of Poland, with these circumstances around him, Mr. Mikolajczyk decided to resign. Almost a month has passed since then, and now I imagine that the prospects of a reconciliation between the Polish Government and the Lublin Committee, with the Soviet Government behind them, have definitely receded; although they might, perhaps, advance again were Mr. Mikolajczyk able to speak with authority for the fortunes of the Polish nation

" The consequences of this rescission of hopes of a working agreement between Russia and the Poles have been masked to British eyes by the fact that the Russian armies on the long Vistula front have been motionless, but when they move forward, as move forward they surely will, and the Germans are expelled from large new tracts of Poland, the area administered by the Lublin Committee will grow, and its contacts with the Soviet Government will become more intimate and strong. I do not know what misfortunes will attend such a development The absence of an agreement may well be grievous for Poland, and the relationship and misunderstandings between the advancing Russian armies and the Polish underground movement may take forms which will be most painful to all who have the permanent well-being of Poland and her relationship with Russia at heart. The fact that a Prime Minister resigns and that a new Government is formed does not, of course, affect the formal diplomatic relationship between States We still recognise the Polish Government in London as the Government of Poland, as we have done since they reached our shores in the early part of this war. This course has been continued up to the present by all the rest of the United Nations, excepting only Russia, which is the Power most concerned and the Power whose armies will first enter the heart of Poland. It is a source of grief to me that all these forces could not have been joined together more speedily against the common foe

" I cannot accept the view that the arrangements which have to be proposed about the frontiers of the new Poland are not solid and satisfactory, or that they would not give to Poland that ' abiding home ' of which I spoke to the House in February. If Poland concedes Lwów and the surrounding regions in the South, or the line known as Curzon Line A, which my right hon. friend the Foreign Secretary will deal with in more detail later on in the Debate—if Poland makes this concession and these lands are joined to the Ukraine, she will gain in the North the whole of East Prussia west and south of the fortress of Koenigsberg, including the great city and port of Danzig, one of the most magnificent cities and harbours in the whole of the world, famous for centuries as a great gathering place of the trade of the Baltic, and, indeed, of the world. This will be hers instead of the threatened and artificial Corridor, which was built so laboriously after the last war, and Poland will stretch broadly along the Baltic on a front of over 200 miles. The Poles are free, so far as Russia and Great Britain are concerned, to extend their territory, at the expense of Germany, to the West I do not propose to go into exact details, but the extensions, which will be supported

* " Liberum Veto," was the highest embodiment of the esteem for the rights of the individual,—one member of Parliament possessed the power to arrest a Bill if he considered that Bill to be contrary to the interests of the country. It was a power which had frequently been abused in Poland at the end of the seventeenth and during the eighteenth century The comparison in this case was not applicable—Mikolajczyk had been " confronted with the resistance of his London colleagues," and he found himself alone against his Cabinet

by Britain and Russia, bound together as they are by the 20 years' Alliance, are of high importance. Thus, they gain in the West and North territories more important and more highly developed than they lose in the East We hear that a third of Poland is to be conceded, but I must mention that that third includes the vast track of the Pripet Marshes, a most desolate region, which, though it swells the acreage, does not add to the wealth of those who own it

Thus I have set before the House what is, in outline, the offer which the Russians, on whom the main burden of liberation still falls, make to the Polish people. I cannot believe that such an offer should be rejected by Poland It would, of course, have to be accompanied by the disentanglement of populations in the East and in the North. The transference of several millions of people would have to be effected from the East to the West or North, as well as the expulsion of the Germans—because that is what is proposed . the total expulsion of the Germans—from the area to be acquired by Poland in the West and the North. For expulsion is the method which, so far as we have been able to see, will be the most satisfactory and lasting. There will be no mixture of populations to cause endless trouble, as has been the case in Alsace-Lorraine A clean sweep will be made I am not alarmed by the prospect of the disentanglement of populations, nor even by these large transferences, which are more possible in modern conditions than they ever were before

" The disentanglement of populations which took place between Greece and Turkey after the last war—my noble Friend opposite may remember—was, in many ways, a success, and has produced friendly relations between Greece and Turkey ever since That disentanglement, which at first seemed impossible of achievement, and about which it was said that it would strip Turkish life in Antolia of so many necessary services, and that the extra population could never be assimilated or sustained by Greece having regard to its own area and population—I say that disentanglement solved problems which had before been the causes of immense friction, of wars and of the rumours of wars. Nor do I see why there should not be room in Germany for the German populations of East Prussia and of the other territories I have mentioned. After all, 6,000,000 or 7,000,000 Germans have been killed already in this frightful war, into which they did not hesitate, for a second time in a generation, to plunge all Europe At the present time, we are told that they have 10,000,000 or 12,000,000 prisoners or foreigners used as slaves in Germany, who will, we hope, be restored to their own homes and lands when victory is gained. Moreover, we must expect that many more Germans will be killed in the fighting which will occupy the spring and summer and which we must expect will involve the largest and fiercest battles yet fought in this war.

" When these ideas, which arose at the Teheran Conference, were first foreshadowed by me to the House, the British and American armies had not landed on the Continent. France was not liberated. She was powerless, not like now when she is rising with great rapidity to a strong and fine position among the nations of the world. The armies of General Eisenhower did not stand along the Rhine when these matters were discussed. They were still gathering in this island, not along the Rhine where they are now growing in strength as the waves of American manhood cross the Atlantic and take their places in the crusade and in the line of battle. Nor had the Russians advanced to the Vistula; vast distances separated them even from the frontiers of Poland Nor was one large German army cut off in Courland, the peninsula which has Memel and Libau at its base. Nor was there that great position which the Russian armies held in the extreme north, with their

right hand, nor was their left hand reaching out beyond Budapest in the south, threatening an advance into the very heart of Austria. Nor had Rome been occupied, nor the Appennines pierced

"In those days, the Poles might well have had some show of reason in asking whether the great Allies would have the power, even if they were so minded, to deliver the new territories to Poland which were to compensate her for what she was giving up in the East, but the situation has changed vastly in favour of the Allies, and it seems to be extremely unlikely, that, after the spring and summer campaigns have been fought—if it be necessary to go so far in the business, and we shall go whatever distance is necessary to complete our object—it seems extremely unlikely that the evil and hateful forces in Germany, who plotted, planned and began this war, will have the power to resist the decisions of a peace or armistice conference, at which the principal victorious Powers will be assembled. The prospect of final victory have, in the time that has passed since these matters were first discussed at Teheran, become for the Allies solid and spacious Therefore, as I say, it has always been said by the Poles, when I have been discussing the matter with them here, 'We know what we have to give up, what certainty have we of receiving compensation in other quarters?' They have much more certainty of it now than at this time last year. In fact, I cannot see any doubt whatever that the Great Powers, if they agree, can effect the transference of population.

"I find great difficulty in discussing these matters, because the attitude of the United States has not been defined with the precision which His Majesty's Government have thought it wise to use. The friendship of the United States Government for Poland, no less than our own, the large mass of Poles who have made their homes in the United States, and are, or are becoming, American citizens, the constitutional difficulties of the United States in making treaties and foreign agreements of every kind—all these have not enabled the Government of that great nation to speak in the terms which I have thought it my duty, with the assent of my colleagues, to use in this House. We know, however, that the Government and peoples of the United States have set their hearts upon a world organisation to prevent the outbreak of future wars, and that this world organisation will be fatally ruptured by a quarrel between any of the three most powerful Empires which compose the Grand Alliance of the United Nations. The President is aware of everything that has passed and of all that is in the minds both of the Russians and of the British He had, at Moscow, in Mr Averell Harriman, the U.S. Ambassador, a most accomplished representative, who in the capacity of observer, was present at all, or nearly all, of our Polish talks on the occasion of our last visit. The President has, therefore, been kept fully informed, not only by His Majesty's Government, but also by his own highly competent and distinguished representatives, and by all the many sources and channels that are open to the unceasing vigilance of the State Department.

"I am particularly careful not even to pretend to speak in the name of any other Power unless so directed beforehand, and I hope the House will make allowances for the care with which I pick my words upon this point. All I can say is that I have received no formal disagreement in all these long months upon the way in which the future of Poland seems to be shaping itself—or is being shaped—but no doubt when the time comes, the United States will make their own pronouncement on these matters, bearing in mind, as they will, the practical aspect which they assume and also that failure on the part of the three greatest Powers to work together would damage all our hopes for a future structure, a world government which,

whatever else it may fail to do, will at any rate be equipped with all the powers necessary to prevent the outbreak of further war

" It is asked, why cannot all questions of territorial changes be left over till the end of the war ? I think that is a most pertinent question and it is, in fact, the answer which I and the Foreign Secretary gave in almost every case that has been presented to us. Well, Sir, I understand the argument. The armies, it is said, may move here and there, their front may advance or recede, this country or that may be in occupation of this space of ground or the other, but it is at the peace table alone that the permanent destiny of any land or people will be decided. Why cannot that be said in this case ? It can be said in every case, or almost every case, except in that of Poland. So why should Poland be excepted from this general rule ? It is only for Polish advantage and to avoid great evils which might occur. The Russian armies—I know nothing of their intentions, I am speaking only of what is obvious to anyone who studies the war map—will probably, during the early part of next year, traverse large areas of Poland, driving the Germans before them. If, during those marches, fierce quarrels and fighting break out between large sections of the Polish population and the Russian troops, very great suffering—which can still be avoided—will infallibly occur, and new poisoned wounds will be inflicted upon those who must dwell side by side in peace, confidence and good neighbourliness, if the tranquillity of Europe is to be assured or the smooth working of the world organisation for the maintenance of peace is to be created and maintained

"All these matters are among the most serious which could possibly be examined as far as our present lights allow Our British principle has been enunciated that, as I have said, all territorial changes must await the conference at the peace table after the victory has been won, but to that principle there is one exception, and that exception is, changes mutually agreed. It must not be forgotten that in the Atlantic Charter is I think inserted the exception that there should be no changes before the peace table except those mutually agreed. I am absolutely convinced that it is in the profound future interest of the Polish nation that they should reach agreement with the Soviet Government about their disputed frontiers in the East before the march of the Russian armies through the main part of Poland takes place That is the great gift they have to make to Russia, a settlement now at this time which gives the firm title of mutual agreement to what might otherwise be disputed at the Peace Conference I must, however, say, because I am most anxious the House should understand the whole position, speaking on behalf of His Majesty's Government in a way which I believe would probably be held binding by our successors, that at the Conference we shall adhere to the lines which I am now unfolding to the House, and shall not hesitate to proclaim that the Russians are justly treated, and rightly treated, in being granted the claim they make to the Eastern frontiers along the Curzon Line as described

" The Foreign Secretary and I have laboured for many months, we have spared no labour of travel, no risk of political rebuff and consequent censure, in our effort to bring about that good understanding between the Poland whom we still recognise and the mighty Ally which has so heavily smitten the German military power. We have never weakened in any way in our resolve that Poland shall be restored and stand erect as a sovereign, independent nation, free to model her social institutions or any other institutions in any way her people choose, provided, I must say, that these are not on Fascist lines, and provided that Poland stands loyally as a barrier and friend of Russia against German aggression from the West And in this task, of course, Poland will be aided to the full by a Russian and British guarantee

and assistance and will also, I cannot doubt, though I cannot declare, be aided by the United States acting at least through the world organisation which we are determined to erect—that she and the whole of the United Nations are determined to erect—for the salvation of mankind toiling here below from the horrors of repeated war

" Another great war, especially an ideological war, fought as it would be, not only on frontiers but in the heart of every land with weapons far more destructive than men have yet wielded, would spell the doom, perhaps for many centuries, of such civilisation as we have been able to erect since history began to be written. It is that peril which, according to the best judgment of this National Government of all parties, which has so lately renewed its troth to stand together for the duration of the war against Germany—it is that peril that we have laboured, and are striving sincerely and faithfully, to ward off. Other powerful States are with us on each side, more powerful States perhaps even than the British Empire and Commonwealth of Nations. We can only try our best, and if we cannot solve the problem, we can at least make sure that it is faced in all its sombre magnitude while time remains."

Churchill brought his speech to its conclusion by prophesying the possible outbreak of " another great war," an evil his Government was " labouring and striving to ward off " There seemed no necessity for him to enlarge on the probable instigator of this war. Referring to the attack of the Powers of Darkness in his last few sentences, the Prime Minister spoke with the greatest sincerity in which vibrated a fear, a fear connected with Poland He seemed to be apprehensive that the frigate of victory and peace he had so carefully piloted might founder on this rock—the Poland, which he, Churchill, had lauded in such magnificent terms in his broadcast immediately after her invasion by two imperialist Powers, when he had foreseen that she, " may for a spell be submerged by a tidal wave but which remains as a rock " Churchill was now recommending that this ' rock,' on which the Versaille order in Europe had been founded by an immeasurable hecatomb of mankind, should not only be submerged but sunk for ever in the Asiatic-Russian ocean. The Prime Minister, it seemed, could visualise no other course except that advocated by the Soviets—a death sentence on Poland . . . " I do not, of course, believe that any real harmony is possible between Bolshevism and present civilisation," Churchill had written years before in his letter to Lloyd George—March 24, 1920. Poland and the Baltic States were part of this ' civilisation ' and yet he was now handing them over into the power of " these deadly snakes" (quoting the same letter), into the power of " sub-human doctrine and super-human tyranny." Ornamenting his speech with the phraseology of Moscow, he now, in 1944, endeavoured to convince his audience that the consent of the Polish Government, not merely to a surgical operation on their territory, but to the complete destruction of their country, should be given, since it was " only for the Polish advantage and to avoid the great evils which might occur," during the Russian offensive across Poland if " fierce quarrels and fighting break out

between large sections of the Polish population and the Russian troops." By this statement alone, the Prime Minister was revealing beyond a question of a doubt, that the Russian troops were not after all " bringing freedom to Poland " as he had emphasised but a short time previously, for in such an event there would surely have been no need for any of this dread of the Red Army or the fear that they might encounter weapons instead of a friendly reception. The sources of information at the disposal of the British Prime Minister were such that there could be no doubt but that he was in possession of evidence which led him to speak in this strain. He was anticipating that "fierce quarrels could break out between great sections of the Polish people and the Russian troops," thereby confirming that there were, in fact, no followers of Marshal Stalin in Poland, and that the behaviour of " great sections of the Polish people " depended upon the orders from their Government in London. What Churchill did not, however, wish to foresee was that the Polish Home Army would support the Russian advance as they did, or that the Russian's answer was again to be the extermination of every detachment of that Army which they encountered, and the persecution of all those whom they could capture And that to further this aim, the N.K V.D. would organise the greatest of man-hunts for the Authorities and soldiers of this Home Army.

The British Prime Minister's speech contained many fulsome compliments levelled at the Polish people, combined with words of sympathy and a great deal of advice on how to ' surrender,' but . . . the bare bones of the Polish problem had only been partially dug up and rattled at the audience. One hundred and fifty years before, one of the greatest politicians of the times, Charles J. Fox, had given a review of similar speeches made in the same House of Commons. " If we saw the rights of Poland," he had proclaimed, " of a neutral and independent nation, openly trampled upon, its territory invaded and all this for the manifest aggrandisement of other Powers, and no war declared or menaced, not even a remonstrance interposed . . could we be blamed for suspecting that the pretended was not the real object of the present war ? "*

The British Prime Minister was to only gradually reveal the truth of the resolutions concerning Poland agreed upon at Teheran. A quarter of a century before, Churchill as the *spiritus movens* of armed intervention in Russia for the benefit of Tsardom, had ' laboured and striven ' to prevent Poland arriving at an agreement with the Soviets , he was now with equal zeal endeavouring to compel the Polish Government to accept a fatal course of appeasement.†

* February 18, 1793.

† . . . if the Poles make a separate and precipitate peace with the Bolsheviks, the Bolshevik Army opposite the Polish front, which is the third strongest Bolshevik army now in the field, could swiftly be transferred to the attack of Denikin , and this might fundamentally jeopardize his continued existence. For us to encourage

After the First Great War, Lloyd George's Government had made every effort to save and strengthen a defeated Germany from France, but still more from a Bolshevik Russia. " Since the Armistice, my policy would have been " claimed Churchill in those days, " peace with the German people, war on the Bolshevik tyranny,"* and now as Prime Minister of England, seemingly more worried by the German war-machine, he was making every move in the opposite direction by strengthening the Soviets. Poland, in every instance, was to bear the brunt of these experiments in the realms of European policy undertaken by the various British Governments, who seemed unable to decide whether or indeed how, they intended to settle the problem of Europe. With regard to Poland, both Lloyd George and Churchill wanted to mould a Polish Republic which corresponded to the British interests and transient situation. The former statesman had been opposed to a restoration of Poland's Eastern territories, on the grounds that, to include a great number of minorities would make her a weak state, and disagreed with the restoration of her western provinces since it would entail weakening Germany. Although Lloyd George had claimed that the restoration of Poland was the most important point of a future peace, nevertheless that country, owing to his action, received neither Danzig nor East Prussia, nor the greater part of Silesia—the identical provinces which Churchill now considered handing to Poland.†

The British policy in relation to the European problem swung from one extreme to the other over a period of a quarter of a century, for the British statesmen had not ventured to tackle this problem in its entirety as had both Germany and Russia. During the two wars and between them, the men at the helm of the British Empire had piloted her along the easiest

the Poles to make such a precipitate and isolated peace at this juncture, when everything is so critical, would utterly stultify (a) the general policy of the Allies in promising support to Admiral Koltchak, and (b) the special policy of Great Britain in sending great consignments of munitions to Denikin.

We should be undoing with our left hand what we had done with our right by pursuing opposite and contradictory policies on different sectors of the common front. It seems therefore clear that our policy at the present moment should be to persuade the Poles to carry on for a few months as they are doing, i e , fighting the Bolsheviks on their borders where and when they can, without preparing for a decisive advance into the heart of Russia or for a separate peace (Churchill's survey to the Cabinet on September 22, 1919, *Aftermath*, p 251)

* *Aftermath*, p 276

† *The Times*, April 26, 1919, F M Simonds

" As we approach the end of the Paris Conference, it becomes more and more unmistakable that the crowning tragedy of the Congress of Vienna is to be repeated A century ago the conquerors of Napoleon perpetrated a crime against Poland which was contained in the several partitions . .

" To-day, under the direct impulsion of Mr. Lloyd George, Poland is again to be sacrificed, indeed, has been sacrificed, so far as the present draft of the Treaty of Peace is concerned and for the sacrifice of Poland, the most disappointing and tragic of all, the responsibility must rest uniquely with Mr. Lloyd George, since up to the moment of his arrival in Paris, Polish prospects were of the brightest, and to his persistent attack has been due their almost total collapse."

possible course, allowing event after event to pass unchallenged, estimating their country to be unequal to the task for which it was predestined by reason of its geographical position and power. They had watched country after country fall before the prevalence of this or that Power, the Rhineland, Abyssinia, Albania, Spain, Austria, Czecho-Slovakia They feared another war, " who in Europe," claimed Baldwin, " does not know that one more war in the West, and the civilisation of the ages will fall with as great shock as that of Rome? "* It was this policy of fear of ' another war ' which had permitted Germany to regain her military strength and re-embark on her territorial aggrandisement and a policy which had always endeavoured to treat Europe as the edge of the British Empire, where all delicate problems should be temporarily settled by some compromise. Such a policy of non-intervention against the forces undermining the created and existing order, might have been successful if some of the nations dwelling in that ' edge ' had not been in the position to shake the complacency of this policy, and threaten Britain herself. But, since two of the three existing Imperialist Powers in the world, packed tight with dynamic forces of aggression, were labouring on the continent of Europe to start a world-wide conflagration, Britain's manoeuvring could do nothing else but end in a fiasco. Just as Foch had prophesied, the work of Lloyd George sufficed for twenty years, not even the life of one generation. Churchill, of his own accord, was casting doubts in his speech as to whether his work would survive even that period of twenty years' peace of Lloyd George

Until Teheran, Churchill had talked enthusiastically of a great organisation of a durable peace based on the federation of Europe. After that meeting, where he and Roosevelt accepted the idea of Russian leadership on the Continent, the sacrifice was begun with the Eastern and part of Central Europe

Whether or not they were meant to be sincere or lasting, Churchill nevertheless had given secret promises to Stalin and he was obliged to disclose these publicly, as he began to do all he could towards smoothing the path of the Moscow overlord as the latter commenced to take over that agreed section of Europe. It can only be assumed that, at root of this change of front, lay the fact that Churchill was convinced that Russia would present less danger to Britain than Germany had The Soviet Union would be fully occupied, at any rate for some years to come, in healing its terrible wounds before it would be ready to embark on a further conquest, meanwhile the German long-distance shells, rockets and flying bombs were still falling on the roofs of London.

The Press of America reported that Stalin had called a halt to the offensive in Poland and was unwilling to continue unless the British Government was prepared to swear once more in public that they and

* *June* 8, 1926.

any future British Governments intended to adhere to the commitments bargained for in the Teheran black market Churchill was forced to go to Canossa, to renounce the principles of England, and give her the same hall-mark of aggression by placing her alongside the Soviet Union, to abandon the Atlantic Charter and support the might of Russia against the rights of Poland and the other European states. He was thrusting a democratic Poland into the keeping of totalitarian Power. He was doing his utmost to convince the Kremlin of the sincerity of his promises, as if the Kremlin would, indeed, be convinced by any words, particularly any of Churchill's. His speech of 15th December was of itself a most tragic one. The doctrines and ideas, for which Hitler had been so severely censured and condemned, and to prevent the spreading and realisation of which Britain had unsheathed her sword, were revived in this speech *ad usum* the stronger ally The principles of *Lebensraum*, disguised under the slogan of ' zone of security,' the theory of the resettlement of vast numbers of population for the benefit of Russia, the doctrine of the super-race, the theory of the omnipotence of the Great Powers and the suppression of the rights of these masses of mankind which comprised the array of so-called ' small nations '—such was the gist of this speech. It would only have seemed natural after this had Britain relinquished the right to sit in judgment and condemn Hitler. The principle of ' vansittartism,' total punishment for the Fuehrer and his accomplices, had received a great set-back. Churchill's speech was completely at variance with the aims which Britain had proclaimed when she embarked on the war. In the fabric of the state organisation of Great Britain, it is the King of England who expresses the basic ideas of the peoples of his Empire and King George VI, on 3rd September, 1939, broadcast —

" We are called with our Allies, to meet the challenge of a principle which, if it were to prevail, would be fatal to any civilised order in the world It is the principle which permits a State, in the selfish pursuit of power, to disregard its treaties and its solemn pledges; which sanctions the use of force, or threat of force, against the sovereignty and independence of other States. Such a principle, stripped of all its disguise, is surely the mere primitive doctrine that might is right, and if this principle were established throughout the world, the freedom of our country and of the whole British Commonwealth of Nations would be in danger. But far more than this—the peoples of the world would be kept in the bondage of fear, and all hopes of settled peace and of the security of justice and liberty among nations would be ended. This is the ultimate issue which confronts us "

There was no reflection of these ideas in the speeches made five years later by the Prime Minister of Britain—they had been forgotten . . .

The sole advantage of Churchill's ' fearless speech ' as one of London's dailies wrote, lay in its dispersal of the atmosphere of hypocrisy, false pretences and obscurity It was not so much that the ' naked bones ' of the Polish problem were revealed, as a light was focussed on the deep moral crisis which had arisen among the Great Powers on the grounds of

their utterly dissimilar war aims. " It was not a Polish crisis," commented the *Manchester Guardian*, " but a crisis of the United Nations. It was not the partition of Poland, it was the partition of Europe." Munich, where Czecho-Slovakia had been laid on the operating table, was but a small incident compared with the deal accomplished at Teheran. The Anglo-French proposals presented to the Czecho-Slovak Government, in order to appease Hitler, were modest in comparison with those elaborated for Poland in the Persian capital The agreement reached at Teheran had something so unusual and out of keeping with the accepted rules of nations and governments, that neither Roosevelt nor Churchill dared reveal the full facts immediately to the British public and their Polish Ally. It was only after several months had passed and urged by Russia, Churchill finally announced that the claims of the U.S.S.R. were ' just and proper ' and Poland had no ' rights.' Chamberlain had asserted in the Commons that the charge of betraying Czecho-Slovakia was " simply preposterous." He had ' saved ' that country. " My good friends," preached Chamberlain from the steps of Downing Street, " this is the second time in our history (he was comparing himself with Disraeli at the Congress of Berlin in 1898) that there has come back from Germany to Downing Street peace with honour I believe it is peace for our time." In those days, it was Churchill who had defended Czecho-Slovakia's right to a free existence, although she was not an ally of Britain. Many and numerous speeches were made by him on this topic (they would form a handsome volume), on his appraisal of this defeat of the Western Democracies. He had thundered in the Commons :

" . We have sustained a total unmitigated defeat, we are in the presence of a disaster of the first magnitude which has befallen Great Britain and France. Do not let us blind ourselves. We must expect that all countries of Central and Eastern Europe will make the best terms with the triumphant Nazi Power

" The road down the Danube, the road to the Black Sea and Turkey, has been broken. It seems to me that all the countries of Middle Europe and the Danube Valley, one after the other, will be drawn into the vast system of Nazi politics, radiating from Berlin. I believe that can be achieved quite smoothly and easily without firing a single shot . . . "

Like Cassandra, he had foretold Germany's next moves, her intention of putting Britain in chains. Yet in 1944, substituting Russia for Germany, he was concluding a bargain, the like of which had never been concluded before in the records of the Western World. On 19th September, 1938, the British and French Governments, addressing Prague, had, for the sake of the " maintenance of peace and safety of Czecho-Slovakia," asked them to transfer to the Reich the " districts mainly inhabited by Sudeten Deutsch." They anticipated that " the area for transfer would probably have to include areas over fifty per cent. of German inhabitants," and that the " international body referred to might be charged with question of possible exchange of population . . . " There were no such

limitations as these in Stalin's terms at Teheran as announced by Churchill The will of the population was *not* mentioned

Incorrect statistics as to the number of Poles in Eastern Poland were published for home consumption in the British Press in order to convince the public that these people were in the minority, but nothing was said as to whether these or the other inhabitants of that country wished to belong to the Soviet Union At Munich, neither the 'attacking Power' nor the 'protecting Powers' had demanded a 'friendly' government, neither had they endeavoured to interfere in the internal life of their disabled victim. But the step which was taken at Teheran could only mean that the attacking Power, dissatisfied by the success of its own terms, was immediately preparing to absorb the remnant of its prey.

"There was a shocked and almost incredible silence," noted Alastair Forbes in the *Daily Mail*, "as the Atlantic Charter was denied by one of its two authors, and, as the man who proudly said that he had not become the King's First Minister in order to preside over the liquidation of the British Empire, suggested that it was the duty of Poland's First Minister to accept the mutilation of his own country.

"Was this the man," asked Forbes, "who spoke for his people when he said. 'We desire no territorial gains, we wish to alter no sovereignty or frontier,' who proclaimed our cause to be that 'of the weak against the strong.'

"It was hard to believe so, as one followed his support of the 'Curzon Line', theft of Poland's beloved Lwów, his sweeping alterations of the map of Europe, his gloss-over of the deep, human problems and the dangers for future peace with which such operations are fraught"

The House cheered when Churchill said that Great Britain "still recognises the Polish Government," and again when he referred to the possibility of Poland gaining Danzig. And there was even louder applause when the Premier continued: "It is asked, why cannot all questions of territorial changes be left over till the end of the war?" The uneasiness of some members erupted in cries of 'No' when the Prime Minister declared that at the peace conference the British Government would not hesitate to proclaim that the Rusisans were justly treated in being granted the claim they had made to a frontier along the 'Curzon Line.' The House was not convinced by the Prime Minister's speech, "it had come as a shock to learn that he was so closely united with the Russian point of view," wrote *Time and Tide*, "particularly when he attempted to attain a co-operation between the Polish Government and the Lublin Committee."

On 15th December, discussion of the Polish problem was confined by Churchill to the question of the 'Curzon Line,' but no indication of any genuine settlement was given There was also a touch of desperation in the way in which he had flung the 'naked bones' of the Polish problem before the House that day. There was also more than a little anger expressed against the Poles, whom he was not defending but attacking, for

heir disinclination to agree with his suggestions Churchill had found among them only one politician, the ex-Premier Mikolajczyk (he had referred to him as " the only light which burns for Poland in the immediate future "), who might be induced to carry out under British patronage the wishes of Russia. He was placing this gentleman in the very dubious category of an agent of His Majesty's Government, and thereby substantially decreasing his credit as a bona-fide independent politician among his fellow-countrymen.

However, Churchill's praise of Mikolajczyk's ' statesmanship ' proved both premature and groundless, for, although the latter, in his attempts to find a compromise, had indeed gone beyond the limits of his power as the Premier of Poland, he was by no means satisfying the Moscow rulers. In an article published shortly after his resignation, Mikolajczyk explained his personal opinion, quoting the terms under which he had presumed Poland might have been able to arrive at an understanding with the Soviets. And those terms were clearly contrary to the Soviet demands. First and foremost they were directly opposed to the enslavement of his country. Mikolajczyk stated in his article that the Great Powers should not only make the decision but accept the responsibility as well. They must agree as to whether the problem of the frontiers was to be settled now or after the war. The Eastern, Western and Northern frontiers should be defined simultaneously. When the time came for the Big Three to take their final decisions, then, at that moment, Poland must be guaranteed her freedom.

It was additionally evident from the statement published in the succeeding month by the Representatives of the Polish Peasants' Party (of which Mikolajczyk was a member), strongly condemning the ' Lublin Committee,' that he was in fact still far from any co-operation with that ' Committee,' referred to, even by Churchill himself, as " an institution supported by the Soviets " but not as a responsible body representing any section of the Polish people.

Churchill inferred more than once that had they (the Poles) put their signature to the ' Curzon Line,' then the Soviets would not have instituted the ' Lublin Committee ', but it was a supposition supported exclusively by its author's belief in the good-will of the Soviets . . Had Mikolajczyk's government been prepared to play the role of the ' Lublin Committee,' and execute the orders of the Kremlin, Stalin either would not have immediately placed a demand for the Eastern provinces of Poland or else would have been very generous with his definition of the ' Curzon Line.' A case of a similar nature related to Carpathian Ruthenia Soviet propaganda had created an out-cry in January, 1944, that this country, like certain others occupied by the Red Army, ' wanted ' to belong to the Soviet Union. When, however, Dr. Benes fell in with Moscow's designs, no further reference for the time being, was made by the Soviets to the ' wishes ' of the Carpathian Ruthenians.

There were particular points made by the British Prime Minister in his speech of 15th December. In the first instance, he stressed that it was Poland who should " make the great gift to Russia "—it was preposterous, however to ask and difficult to visualise any nation being willing to condemn one-third of her population to misery or death, and cut off half her territory as a ' gift ' for a great Power. It was a repetition of the language of Munich . . . Just before the partition of Czecho-Slovakia, both the French and the British Government had, with extraordinary hypocrisy, written in their proposition of 18th September, 1938, to Prague that they " recognised how great is the sacrifice . . . required of the Czecho-Slovak Government in the cause of peace . . " and "because that cause is common, both to Europe and in particular to Czecho-Slovakia herself, etc. . . . " M. Grabski, that politician whom the British Prime Minister warmly referred to as " an able colleague of M. Mikolajczyk," wrote :

" The practice of the Soviet Government in the area of Eastern Poland, which it has occupied from September 1939 to June 1941, leaves no room for doubt that if the present territorial demands of the U S.S R were to be fulfilled, it would be the equivalent to surrendering more than four million Poles (and twice as many other nationalities) who were left in the Eastern provinces of Poland after the deportation, to a most ruthless extermination. If the Polish Nation agreed to that, in truth it would not deserve to survive "*

Muscovy-Russia had increased her territories fifty times over since the 15th century by acquiring ' gifts ' of this type from her neighbours , but as the Poles were aware from their history, she could not be satiated . . Sections of the Polish Commonwealth which had never previously belonged to her, had been ' acquired ' in 1494, 1648, 1667, 1770, 1772, 1793 and in 1795 and 1815, and yet again in 1920, and at every opportunity she had claimed the lands stretching further westward into Poland.

The second point in Churchill's speech, difficult for any member of the Western world to swallow, was his acceptance of that Asiatic custom of compulsorily transferring masses of population, which Moscow had proceeded to carry out in its hysteria of cleaning-up the frontier zone. This migration madness of the Kremlin's overlord was warmly endorsed and praised by the British Premier as the panacea of all Polish problems The Roman law, that the soil belonged to the people who toil on it and that man belongs to his country, had been adhered to throughout the two thousand years of the Christian era , and therein lay that essential difference between the Western world and the Asiatic nomads. It was a remarkable phenomenon to watch the Prime Minister of Britain, the strongest representative of the Western World, supporting this Asiatic conception of a State and the individual, so utterly alien to his world.

In a four-hour Debate, Parliament confirmed that the future of world peace and Britain's position in Europe, depended on the solution of the Polish-Russian question. Churchill's policy from 22nd June, 1941,

* *The Polish-Soviet Frontier*, London, 1943.

found itself in the dock during that Friday Debate, his policy which had forced England to abandon its war aims and to helplessly watch the Soviets sweep the nations and states one by one into their drag-net. Poland was the most poignant example, and, although both Churchill and Eden gave much prominence to the question of territorial compensation (the latter was careful to make no mention of the Western frontier of Poland), the majority of the speeches made by the members did not hide the fact that the most vital issue was that of Poland's independence.* "It is melancholy to think," remarked Ivor Thomas (Labour), " that, after more than five years of fighting in a war which we entered to defend the independence of Poland, we should be debating whether Poland is to be a State at all . . " While Alan Graham commented " that at this moment the Polish nation is in grave danger of extinction . . . "

The speakers debated on the relationship between Poland and Russia, and not, as the Soviet propaganda tended to present the affair, on the quarrels between the ' Poles from London and those from Lublin.' The House was unanimous in its recognition of one point at least, namely, that the ' Lublin Committee ' was merely a Soviet puppet operated by the Kremlin.

At the end of the Debate Eden gave a tendencious account of the history of the ' Curzon Line,' omitting some of the most important facts, which were in favour of Poland. He did not make it sufficiently clear that the decision of the Supreme Council of the principal Allied Powers regarding the Demarcation Line of December 8, 1919 (which in the summer of 1920 was to become associated with Lord Curzon's name), referred only to the territories of the former Russian Empire, that it did not set up a frontier, and that it reserved Poland's right to the territories east of that line. He omitted to point out that the extensions of the ' Curzon Line ' known as Lines A and B, referred to the Polish districts which had formed part of the Habsburg Empire and had never belonged to Russia. Eden recalled that in the Spring of 1919, the Supreme Council's Commission on Polish Affairs had worked out a project for settling the future of Eastern Galicia and had drawn up two alternative frontier lines : Line A, running east of Przemysl and west of Lwów, was proposed as the boundary between Poland proper and an autonomous Eastern Galicia, which it was hoped would be set up under the suzerainty of Poland. Line B, farther to the

* A. P. Herbert, M P , was not it seemed convinced by the Prime Minister's thoughts on the Fifth Partition of Poland. He took no part in the Debate, but published on December 17, in the *Sunday Graphic*, the following poem which expressed more than his own personal doubts on the current events

" Unreasonable Poles, why do you falter ?/Be sensible—be realistic, pray /Yours are the only frontiers that must alter /You are the one crusader in the way /Unreasonable Poles, you will be fatter /Things of the spirit are not your concern / Oxford and Cambridge do not greatly matter /And you shall have Lough Swilly in return /Unreasonable Poles, preserve traditions /In just two centuries, you must allow,/You've thrice enjoyed benevolent partitions./For Heaven's sake, why start to argue now ? "

east, leaving Lwów and Drohobycz (the oil-fields) to Poland, was recommended unanimously with the approval of Sir Eyre Crowe, British representative—if Eastern Galicia was to be divided between Poland and an independent Galician-Ukrainian State It was not to be anticipated that Eastern Galicia would be handed to those Bolsheviks whom England and France had fought in an effort to wipe them from the face of the earth. And furthermore, at the time of the post-war settlement, there had also never been any question of giving it to Russia

Dwelling on the territorial aspects of the problem of Poland, the Prime Minister praised the areas which he hoped she would receive as ' compensation ' at the cost of Germany, but he was careful to avoid mentioning what else she would receive in addition to Danzig and part of East Prussia. He referred contemptuously to the Pripet Marshes (' a most desolate region '), stating that these territories behind the ' Curzon Line ' formed a ' third of Poland,' when, in fact, it was at least 46.5 per cent of the Polish State. Eden also supported the Prime Minister in his theory and when he quoted the figures of the population between the Lines A and B, diminished the number of Polish inhabitants in Eastern Galicia. He said : " out of a total of about 1,500,000, there were (in 1931) over 500,000 Ukrainians, little more than 250,000 Poles and the rest Jews." According to this statement, the number of Jews was equal to the total of Ukrainians and Poles combined In actual fact, the number of Poles in this area was 750,000 and when the problem of the division of Eastern Galicia between Poland and some future independent Ukraine arose in 1919, the Allied Powers had for this very reason proposed that this area (the Lwów region) should belong to Poland. Eden resorted to the Russian (and Hitler's) racial theories to justify his reduction in the figure of the number of Poles in Eastern Poland, and expressed doubts as to whether the Jews and the Orthodox and Greek Catholics, who recognised themselves as Poles in the census, should, in fact, be acknowledged as such. The entire trend of the Foreign Secretary's speeches was intended to convey to his audience that this area contained no more than " one-third Polish inhabitants " But, in fact, that proportion was nearer forty per cent and would have been much higher had it not been for the ruthless campaign of russification and systematic extermination for well over a century Eden carefully avoided the issue that Eastern Galicia and the whole of Eastern Poland contained no Russian population and also that small point, as to whether or not the inhabitants would be willing to transfer their State allegiance from Poland to Russia. Since the British Government had taken the stand that they should defend the Soviets' claims against Poland, the main speeches in the debate, i e., Churchill and Eden, repeated in detail (except for the open insults) the Soviets' catalogue of arguments. Of these, the ' Curzon Line ' was hammered the most. From the first moment, when this type of argument was brought forward, those who knew the Soviets' tactics had no doubts but that this ' line '

was used to distract attention from the main action. While Russian propaganda was still continuing its outcry regarding this ' line,' and verbally attacking the Poles, and while the British Government duly repeated their slogans day by day, the Red Army and the N.K.V D. were busily engaged in introducing and stabilising the Soviet order, not only throughout Poland, but over those 100 million peoples between the Baltic and the Aegean Sea. When this moot point of the ' Curzon Line ' was lost in the tornado of events, the Russians turned the attention of the world towards new fields, such as oil concessions in Iran, the question of Trieste, Carinthia and so forth.

It would have been surprising indeed if the misleading statements and misrepresentations of the truth by members of the British Government had not been followed up during the Debate by M P s with Communist or anti-Polish tendencies . . . Mr. Price (Labour), for instance, endeavoured to convince his audience that ' there was no question that Lwów is mainly a Polish town,' but ' the people in the rural area round there are Ukrainian to a man.' The figures of census undertaken by both Austrian and Polish authorities did not support this statement According to the census of 1931, the city of Lwów had 312,000 inhabitants of whom 200,000 were Poles (63 7 per cent), 75,000 Jews (25 per cent) and 35,000 Ukrainians and Ruthenians (11.3 per cent).

According to the official German guide book, *Das General-Gouvernement*, by Karl Baedeker (Leipzig, 1943), the city of Lwow, to which the Germans added some suburban districts, had a population of 420,000, of whom 12,000 were Germans, 42,000 (10 per cent.) Ukrainians and ' the rest were Poles,' the rest being 366,000 (87 1 per cent.). The Jews were not mentioned, but it is known that the Jewish ghetto of Lwów had been liquidated, in 1942.

With regard to the rural area quoted, the figures revealed that —

In the district of Lwów, excluding the city itself, the Polish population stood at 56.9 per cent. In eight other districts of south-eastern Poland, east of the river San, from fifty to sixty per cent , in twelve other districts, somewhere in the region of fifty per cent. In the remaining districts, particularly those bordering on the Carpathian Mountains, and relatively thinly populated, the Polish peasant population was between twenty and thirty per cent.

Therefore, in that part of the country between the rivers San and Zbrucz which, according to Price, was ' Ukrainian to a man,' over 2,200,000 were Poles and less than 3,000,000 Ukrainians, i e., Ruthenians. It was an all-Catholic population.

The reversal of the truth regarding Poland and the mis-representation of facts and figures was paving the way for the ' Lublin Committee,' which, though " not fully representative in its personalities, by its action . shows very representative of the long-ago desires of the Polish peasants . . . " and then Mr. Price quoted that the agrarian reforms in Poland " hardly went any distance at all " and that, " under the so-called Nieswiez Agreement, Pilsudski came to an understanding with the big landlords which partially suspended agrarian reforms . . . "

Mr Price mentioned that between the two Great Wars, only 2,000 hectares were distributed among the peasants, when in fact 3,250,295

hectares (8,059,532 acres) an area equal to all the arable land in England and Wales had been distributed These 3,250,295 hectares represented half of all the farm lands of over 100 hectares owned either by the State, private ownership or corporations in 1921. The greatest amount of land was parcelled out in 1927 (245,087 hectares), that is, therefore, just after the 'Nieswiez Agreement' mentioned by Mr. Price

Challenged by the Polish economists as to the accuracy of his figures, in a letter to *Free Europe* Mr Price admitted that there had been a printer's error in *Hansard*, and that he had stated not 2,000 but 2,000,000 hectares Under such circumstances, therefore, his statement that the agrarian reforms in Poland 'hardly went any distance at all,' could be appraised in one way only Similar statements having as their aim to present Poland as a backward and slowly progressing country, was along the usual lines of Soviet propaganda

The Poland of 1920-1939 may have been guilty of many omissions, but to accuse her of being reluctant to perform social and economic reforms proves that the author of such charges had not the slightest conception of the reality of life in that country. After their liberation from beneath the yoke of three Powers, the Polish people were anxious to place the new State on the highest level possible, and, endeavouring to do so, perhaps instituted too many reforms at once. It was obvious that this country devastated by wars could not afford to uphold all of them financially. Sir Patrick Dollan wrote (*The Labour Movement and the Polish Cause*, Glasgow, 1945) in the following terms —

" What was said about (Poland) in 1920 and 1939, was that everybody in Poland was living in a 'dictatorship' We swallowed that dope here. There was no dictatorship. The Trade Unions still flourished, the Co-operative societies were maintained, the Parliamentary Parties went on agitating and in many towns you had Socialist majorities.

" Let us look at the progress made by Poland in these twenty years. The King of Norway said in my presence recently, in answer to a question as to what he thought about the Beveridge Report, that he thought it was good for Britain but it had been adopted in Norway 25 years ago. So might one say that about Poland I have made some study of industrial conditions in Poland Much of your social legislation was superior to ours—you have 15 days' holiday with pay, 7-hour working day, with 6½ hours for men who are working in the deepest mines.

" You have a maternity scheme, child welfare, old age pensions, hospitals and many other provisions that other countries would like to adopt, and envy you for having operated them successfully. All this was done for a country which had to suffer over 130 years of partition and despotism and was denied any expression of language and culture.

" The best illustration I know of the progress made by Poland is Lodz. There are 600,000 people living in Lodz In 1919 there was no drainage, no water supply, no amenities, no pavements, and that is how you were living under Russian occupation Within 20 years, however, you had turned that city over and given it modern services. In my city of Glasgow there are still 400,000 people living in one or two-roomed apartment houses that do not provide modern sanitary arrangements.

" . . . Poland was the only country to honour every Charter of the International Labour Office, in advance of other countries."

The debate on the Polish problem resulted in a few Socialists and Liberal speakers giving their support to the Government policy, while the majority of the Conservatives expressed their grave doubts : " The burden of their argument," wrote the *Daily Telegraph*, " was that Britain's honour demanded the full support of Polish independence and the rejection of the authority of the Lublin Committee." " The House seemed agreed that the present solution might have to be accepted, but should not be underwritten by this country," wrote the *Daily Mail*. But the subsequent events proved that the voice of the British Parliament had not the slightest influence on the foreign policy of its Government.

The Liberal Party (whose leading speaker, " with his tail between his legs," according to the *Daily Mail*, " had made a thoroughly miserable contribution ") issued a statement a few days later (on 20th December), defining their position regarding the most vulnerable points of the British foreign policy on Greece and Poland. With regard to the latter, the Liberals outlined that :—

" The principles of the Atlantic Charter are being gravely endangered The authors of the Charter declared that they desired to see ' no territorial changes that do not accord with the freely-expressed wishes of the peoples concerned ', and this country went to war to ensure that all differences between the nations should be settled by negotiations and not by force.

" The Liberal Party urges the Governments of the Great Powers not to underwrite any arrangement between Poland and Soviet Russia involving large-scale transfers of territory and population, unless and until it has been freely negotiated and agreed to by both parties concerned."

There was nothing new or original in this Statement, and, by addressing it to the Great Powers instead of to their own Government, they upheld the principles but avoided the issue.

The following extracts from the debate of 15th December, 1944, are the most characteristic and give some details of the Russo-Polish problem:-

Mr. Raikes (*Conservative*) · " . . whole future peace of the world depends beyond all else upon a freely negotiated agreement between Poland and Russia. I use the words ' freely negotiated ' and I underline them. . . What is the picture before us to-day ? We are faced with a Poland which has been devastated by years of war, a Poland which we guaranteed—though not its exact frontiers—in 1939, a Poland that is asked to-day to hand away practically half her territory, territory which was agreed to by Russia herself under the Treaty of Riga, first in 1920 and then again in the 1930's. I could not help wondering while the Prime Minister was speaking what would have been said if, during the great days of 1940, when Britain stood alone with her honour untarnished, the one hope of civilisation in the world, any hon. or right hon. Member had got up and said ' Of course, the guarantee of Poland does not mean more than that, when Poland regains her liberty, she will have at least half of her former area.' I wonder what, the people of this country would have said at that time, when Polish airmen almost alone among those of the nations of the world, were dying by the side of our men in the Battle of Britain, when Polish troops, alone of any troops in the world at that time were fighting beside us on every battle front. . . . It was obvious in 1939 that Poland, although guaranteed, would be overrun, but I challenge the hon. Member or anybody else to say that it

was not the view of practically everybody in this country that by challenging the might of the aggressor, Poland, though at first defeated, would be restored to her former greatness after an Allied victory. What was the position at Moscow? The Prime Minister dealt very sketchily with the Moscow conversations, and I propose, therefore, to go into them in a little more detail, because it is just as well to know how these romantic Poles feel who are accused of demanding the impossible. Mr. Mikolajczyk went to Moscow under great difficulties. There was the background of Eastern Poland, already occupied by Russian troops, the background of Eastern Poland already being treated as Russian territory without any agreement, mutual or otherwise

"It was with that background that M. Mikolajczyk went to Moscow. What are the terms? . First, we understand that the Polish Government were told categorically that they had to give up all territories east of the Curzon Line, and that at once—at once. There was no question of a demarcation line until hostilities were over, but those territories were to be given up at once. Those territories included 33 per cent of the Polish population and 47 per cent of the pre-war territory of Poland It was rather a big bite. Secondly, the Polish Government in London were to amalgamate with the Lublin Government I think we might sweep away at any rate one subterfuge Neither the British Government, nor the Russian Government, nor the Polish Government, regard Lublin as anything else but a fake M. Mikolajczyk was told I understand at Moscow, first, that in this amalgamation, Lublin must have 75 per cent of the representation of the Polish Government and the rest of the parties 25 per cent. I believe it was indicated that if a proper arrangement could be made, if Mikolajczyk was sufficiently accommodating, it might be worked out on a 50-50 basis—a good old British compromise. I wonder what the Prime Minister and his Government would say if it was suggested by a foreign power that the hon. Member for West Fife (Mr. Gallacher) should have a 50-50 representation

Mr. Messer (*Tottenham, South*) . "What an absurd comparison."

Mr. Raikes: "Judging by the representation of the Communist Party in the Polish Parliament in the years between 1920 and 1939 . . Regarding these two reciprocal offers to which the Prime Minister referred as compensation for the Poles, all I say is that the offer of East Prussia means East Prussia without Koenigsberg, without Pilau, the fortress of Koenigsberg which would dominate the Gulf of Gdynia and also control the Port of Danzig. As regards the offer of German lands to the Oder, it is easy enough to consider on the map depopulating millions of people. But does the House appreciate what that means—4,000,000 Poles east of the Curzon Line dragged from the homes in which they have lived for generations, 4,300,000 Ukrainians left to be Russian citizens, whether they wish it or not, and 5,000,000 Germans again forced from their homes and transferred to Western Germany What a sum of human misery . . .

"There is one thing that I deeply regret. Many people may feel that M. Mikolajczyk is the ablest Prime Minister Poland has had, but the differentiation between the degree of help likely to be given by our Government to the present Polish Government as compared to the last, was an unfortunate phrase on the part of the Prime Minister of England. If we cold shoulder the present Polish Government and merely back M. Mikolajczyk and the Government of which he is a Member, we shall allow the Prime Minister to turn into a 'king-maker' like the Earl of Warwick in the 15th century. I do not think it will pay in the long run for the Government of this country to be strongly partisan in regard to the personalities in Cabinets formed by friendly allied Powers who have a right to select their own Ministers as they

will. We have still before us an unsettled Russian-Polish problem. I think it can still be settled, but it will only be dealt with effectively if Great Britain is prepared to raise her voice as she has done in the past as a great supporter of international morality and honourable dealing. May I remind the Foreign Secretary of words spoken 100 years ago by a Foreign Secretary, perhaps even greater than he is, Lord Palmerston.

'I hold that the real policy of England is to be the champion of justice and right. As long as England keeps herself in the right, as long as she wishes to permit no injustice, as long as she sympathises with right and justice, she will never find herself altogether alone'

Mr. Pickthorn (*Cambridge University, Conservative*) "This has been so far a very sad Debate . . We have been warned by one former speaker not to say anything that might make things more difficult for Poland . . . On every previous occasion on which this matter has been discussed, we have been warned by His Majesty's Government, by *The Times* and by other superior persons and institutions to be very careful not to say anything that would do harm . I think we have been so careful not to say things that might do harm, that we have slipped into the opposite error, the error of keeping quiet about things about which public ignorance does harm . . . The Prime Minister quoted for us to-day the speech which he made on 22nd February . . . In this speech he said · 'It was with great pleasure that I heard from Marshal Stalin that he, too, was resolved upon the creation and maintenance of a strong, integral, independent Poland as one of the leading Powers in Europe.' I have never known very clearly what 'integral' means, but 'strong' and 'independent' are words which most of us can understand The Prime Minister went on to say that His Majesty's Government adhered to the principle that territorial changes should be reserved for the permanent peace settlement. But he made it very difficult for anybody to believe that the principle would be very effective when he said · 'We did not approve of the Polish occupation of Wilno in 1920 The British view in 1919 stands expressed in the so-called Curzon Line.' I think that the Prime Minister's history is mistaken on that point I do not think the Curzon Line does express what had been the British view as to the permanent frontier. But that I would not urge, all I am saying is that the Prime Minister on 22nd February, by stating this principle in regard to territorial changes, indicated that it was to be expected that when those changes did happen, they would be the changes desired by one side and not any change that might be suggested by the other. It did rather whittle away that principle . . . I do not wish to argue where the frontiers ought to be of Poland For all I have to say to the contrary the Eastern frontier of Poland should be the Chilterns and the Western frontier the Alleghanies; but I beg hon. Members, and especially Members on the Government Front Bench, not to use the argument against us that this country has never guaranteed any specific frontier If anybody ever guaranteed the British Isles or the British State, it would be taken to guarantee its boundaries at the time of the guarantee If, at the time of the guarantee to Poland, there was any secret proviso either that the guarantee was to work or that it was not to work in circumstances not then immediately contemplated, I think the time has come when the Foreign Secretary ought to tell us about it. If there was not any such secret proviso, I hope we shall never again hear any argument about our not guaranteeing any specific frontier.

"On the specific-frontier point and on the guarantee point, I should like to ask the Foreign Secretary another question. The Prime Minister, speaking in this House, said to us the other day that it was to be hoped that there would be a guarantee from the three great Powers 'It is certainly

to be hoped that the three great Powers will guarantee an independent, sovereign free Poland' That is what the Prime Minister said to us not so many days ago, on 27th October. Within the month, Mr. Stettinius said: 'The specific question of a guarantee of the Polish frontier by this Government was not, and could not have been, at issue since this Government's traditional policy of not guaranteeing frontiers in Europe is well known.' I suppose it was well known to the Foreign Office. I suppose it was well known to those who advised my right hon Friend the Prime Minister when he spoke in this House on 27th October.

"But I would not put the main question upon definings or sharings of frontier or of guarantee Some hon. Member from the other side begged friends of Poland to be careful. I am not a friend of Poland. I am a friend of England, and if I am a friend of any other country in the world, perhaps Scotland and France might compete for that friendship. I speak in this House not in the least as a friend of Poland. I think it is not the business of this House to consider the interests of Poland as such, and that the specific business of this House is to consider the interests of the British Empire and the British people . . . I am not concerned about where Polish frontiers should be. I think it is a very interesting question that we might discuss on another day. What I am concerned about is, wherever the Polish frontier is and however small or great Poland is, will the countries of Europe, at the moment when Germany is defeated, think that those lines of frontier were drawn wherever they have been drawn as a result of complete fidelity on the part of the British Government, or will Europe not think so. I believe that on the answer to that question depends the chance of any peace at all before all of our sons are dead

"Therefore, in a sense I attach much more importance to the Lublin Committee than I do to the actual frontier In one sense I agree, respectfully, with the hon. Member who said that we need not waste time with the Lublin Committee, because every body knows it is bogus. Is there anybody who will dare to say that it is less bogus than the Vlasov Committee? The thing is completely and absolutely bogus, and it is not therefore worth while going through the biographies of the members who compose it and guessing which of them have been lifelong paid employees of the O.G P.U. or who have not, and who have been imprisoned for what and who had not. I do not think that is worth doing. There are two things which I hope the House will forgive me for thinking worth mention, two things which do prove the bogus nature of this Committee.

"One is what happened in Warsaw in August and September. That rising, whatever else anybody may think about it, was perhaps the most heroic episode of the war The whole population rose. Nobody ever denied that the whole population rose. Even broadcasts which were most against Warsaw, both the German-controlled and the Russian-controlled broadcasts in the early days, when both sides were trying to play the thing down, agreed that it was a 100 per cent. affair, and that the whole city rose. That is more convincing than a plebiscite. You could have a plebiscite that gave you 99.99999 "Yesses' and you could not get so convincing a proof as that was, where the allegiance of the Poles went. The allegiance of the Poles went to the so-called 'emigre' Government. In that respect, I think we might be a little careful about describing our allies as emigre Governments, which has become almost a term of abuse, and threatens to be a terrible term of reproach against us One day, a country which stands up on the same side as ourselves has 'found its soul' and two days or two months, no, but at any rate less than two years later, it is an 'emigre Government' Anyway, that was one proof that the Polish Government

are certainly a legitimate Government and also have the highest ground for legitimacy, that it is a Government which are taken for granted and taken as a matter of course by those for whom they are speaking

" The second reason for saying that the Polish Government is the legitimate government of Poland and the Lublin Government is not, is, in the words of the Prime Minister, which he quoted again to-day. I do not think I can find the exact words, but I think I can quote them fairly exactly. He said : ' If only the Poles had taken the advice we tendered them at the beginning of this year, the additional complication produced by the formation of the Lublin Committee would not have arisen.' I think those words are near enough. He said those in October or February, and he repeated them to-day It seems that the Prime Minister has no doubt that the whole thing is bogus, artificial, fictitious There is not the least doubt about it.

" What, in those circumstances, becomes the duty of His Majesty's Government? I will tell the House as plainly as I can . . . The duty of His Majesty's Government is to make quite certain, at very nearly whatever risk that the world knows that whatever regime is set up in Poland, if it is not obviously on the face of it a wholly independent regime, and whatever frontiers are drawn for Poland, if those frontiers are in any respect unfavourable to Poland, that those unfavourable decisions have not been facilitated by us ; and, above all, that we have not been parties to any plan for using the Lublin Committee as a lever for squeezing, putting a squeeze on, the Polish Government, to whom we are bound by every tie of honour, or on the Polish people, for whom our hearts must, even in Wolverhampton, continue to bleed "

Miss Rathbone (*Independent, Combined English Universities*) . I shall not speak long, and I shall not speak at all on the vexed question of Polish frontiers. My opinions on that subject are forming themselves only slowly, and I should not be justified in inflicting them on the House . . The issues I want to raise really concern whether 100,000 or several hundred thousand people may die of something like starvation. I want to raise two issues which I approach purely from a humanitarian point of view. The first is the issue of the deportations from Poland and the Russian parts of Poland to the U.S.S.R., and I shall give the facts as presented to me by those who have studied the question very closely, both British and Polish people But, mark you, I do not take responsibility for the accuracy of all these facts The figures may have been, and I think, probably have been, exaggerated ; certainly they are only approximate, and the descriptions of hardship which have been brought before me are possibly also exaggerated, seeing that they must be mostly based on hearsay or through very slow-moving underground channels. But I do submit that, making allowance for maximum exaggeration possible, the whole position is decidedly disquieting, and we should be very careful lest we take any responsibility for acquiescing over it.

"As to deportations, there are two periods to which I wish to refer, the earlier date being from February, 1940, to June, 1941, at the time when Russia was forced into the war by German aggression. I believe it is not disputed by anyone that during that period vast numbers of Poles and other people besides—the latter I do not intend to discuss—were deported to distant parts of the U S.S.R. The alleged figures given to me are that some 880,000 civilians plus a great number of prisoners-of-war—and also great numbers who were forcibly mobilised—in all well over 1,000,000 persons, were affected The civilians included several hundred thousands of women and children. They were sent to various distant parts of European Russia, to Siberia and to Central Asiatic Republics and elsewhere, and, owing to the haste with which they were sent off, they were sent with exceedingly

nadequate provision of food and clothing and in overcrowded conditions so far as transport was concerned They are said—all those that were fit—to have been put to forced labour, many in an Arctic climate, in such conditions of underfeeding and underclothing that thousands are said to have succumbed It is reported that in April, 1943, over 270,000 Polish citizens were benefiting from the relief organisations of the Polish Embassy set up in Kuibyshev, including 95,000 men, 98,000 women and 78,000 children, when the work of the Polish relief organisations was brought to an end by the rupture of diplomatic relations between the two countries. After that relief stopped and since then, except during a brief period when the Australian representative had some access, there has been no access allowed to those persons by any impartial persons, and neither the International Red Cross, Quakers, nor any other international body, were allowed access

" The second series of deportations is much later—during and since August of the present year. It is alleged to affect large numbers, including many officers and men who had fought actively with the Red Army in the common fight against Germany, and who were afterwards seized upon, and for one reason or other, deported The facts about that are rather more doubtful. Obviously they come from underground sources which may or may not be reliable. The position is unsatisfactory but the extent of it is less fully established than in the case of the earlier deportations. I merely want to say that all this is very disquieting, and the question is whether the Russian authorities have anything to be ashamed of, anything they would not like impartial people from other countries to see If not, why cannot they allow access, not to any busybodies, but to recognised organisations ? All these delays and these difficulties about the deportees must inevitably strengthen the fear, just or unjust, that the Soviet have reason to dislike impartial witnesses . . I am justified in asking my right hon. Friend, who will reply, whether he can give us some assurance . . . Did he, when he was in Moscow, or will he, in his representations to Moscow, raise this question " What about the deportees, and why do you not want people to visit them ? " And " Why should it not be possible to send supplies to them ? " "

Captain Alan Graham (*Conservative*) " This Debate, of course, centres round the Russian-Polish situation, and our British attitude towards it, but it seems to me that far bigger issues are involved, namely, the whole future of European civilisation. What is the key-note of our civilisation in contrast with Asiatic concepts ? It is surely the infinite value of the individual human soul. In the East . . . to them the individual is next to nothing, but in Europe he is all-important

" This is a basic concept on which all our hopes of man's progress are founded : the social services, to assist his bodily infirmities ; freedom of religion, so that his soul may prosper ; our democratic institutions, so that the State may derive the greatest possible voluntary service from every free, individual citizen. This is an idea of which Nazi Germany is the mortal foe , and for this idea Poland, France and ourselves drew the sword in September, 1939 For this idea, in 1940, when Europe lay prostrate under the Nazi heel, we alone continued to fight ; for which Europe and the whole civilised world still pay us their tribute of admiration. Consequently, we were, and we still are, considered the champions of European civilisation. From this role we cannot withdraw without shame, dis-honour, and material danger. The Polish nation has always been a member of our European family, and a worthy contributor to European civilisation—indeed, for centuries one of its doughtiest champions. At this moment, the Polish nation is in grave danger of extinction at the hands of our enemy, Germany,

and, I am sorry to say, at the hands of our other Ally, Russia. We cannot afford, nor can Europe afford, to allow this to happen.

" What does Russia demand of Poland ? She demands half her territory, and that she should be governed by the Lublin Committee, which, the world knows, is an utterly unrepresentative body of Poles, provided by Russia, and whose authority and power rest solely on the Russian N.K.V.D , or political police, the child of the O.G P U , and Russian bayonets. In other words, the Polish Government are to surrender half their country to Russia, and to accept Russian Government in all but name over what remains. Is it any wonder that both M. Mikolajczyk and the present Polish Government refused to set their hands to what would have been nothing else but the suicide-warrant of their country and their nation ? Further, it was expected of them to agree to this without any positive guarantees of the independence of Poland. We know for a fact that the United States Government have definitely refused any guarantee for Poland. There were some verbal assurances given by the Prime Minister when last he spoke on this subject, and there have been statements by Mr. Stalin ; but, unfortunately, there have been other statements by Mr. Stalin which have not subsequently been implemented Naturally, Mr. Mikolajczyk's Government were unable to agree to these terms and signified their unanimous refusal to the British Government on 3rd November Therefore, it seems unfair that any persons should charge the present Polish Government with being necessarily less willing to meet the Russian demands than the former Polish Government. It may be asked, what is the moral justification for such demands being put to Poland, our martyred Ally, who gave us such indispensable aid at the time of the Battle of Britain, and who was the first Power to fight against Nazi Germany ? The answer is, absolutely none In fact, we are morally and textually bound, by Article 3 of our guarantee of 1939, to Poland, to support Poland not only against armed aggression, but against any attempt to ' undermine Polish independence, by processe of economic penetration or in any other way.' When Hitler, in August, 1939, sought to persuade us to dis-interest ourselves in the fate of Poland, the British Government of those days replied .

> ' The German Government will be aware that His Majesty's Government have obligations to Poland, by which they are bound, and which they intend to honour. They could not, for any advantage offered to Great Britain, acquiesce in a settlement which put in jeopardy the independence of a State to whom they have given their guarantee."

'That was the voice of Britain in August, 1939, when we were materially a very weak Power ; but our moral courage then was indeed great. Has anything happened since then to make us weaker in material force or in any degree less courageous ? Has Poland since then done anything to lessen our esteem for her ? Perhaps the behaviour of Polish troops at Monte Cassino and at Falaise may be mentioned. Has Poland done anything to justify us in ignoring those solemn obligations in which she, then and now, has placed her trust If any nation has spilled her blood more readily in the common cause than Poland, I have yet to hear of it Five million Poles have so far died in the struggle against Germany—one in every seven of the population—and they are still dying, in Poland and on every battle front. And why ? Are 5,000,000 Poles dying for half their territories to pass at once under an alien yoke, and the rest of their territory to be governed by a stranger ? If the Briton of 1944 or 1945 were to consent to such an outrage, the Briton of 1939 would be the first to testify against him, and to disown such dishonourable behaviour. Why should we now shamelessly cast away our reputation as the defenders of honour and European civilisation ?

Our armed might was never stronger than it is to-day; our moral standing in spite of some things that have happened, is still high But we are honest neither with ourselves nor with Russia if we pretend that we can disinterest ourselves in the fate of Poland.

"It is actually said that for the last month—whether or not because of the change in Government I do not know—we have sent no further supplies to the Underground Army in Poland Can we afford to ignore this organised army of 160,000 combatants against Germany, recognised by ourselves three months ago as combatants? I should like to know from the right hon. Gentleman whether that statement is true, that we have taken the occasion of the change in the Polish Government to refuse to go on supplying these forces of the Polish Underground Army, who, against heavy odds, are still fighting our battle. They will get arms from somewhere, if not from us Is not such action calculated to drive them into the arms of Germany. If His Majesty's Government do not now stand up for Polish independence, they will force all Central Europeans to rally round Germany, even in defeat, and to make Germany, as she claims to be Europe's defender against the Eastern invader. Poland is the test-case for European civilisation If we desert Poland, Europe will desert us, and that will be our ruin France, a power by no means at the maximum of her strength to-day, has hastened already to declare her concern in what goes on in Eastern Europe, and she considers it of vital importance to her, Western Power though she is. The days are past when the Channel served us—' as a moat . . Against the envy of less happier lands '

"V 1 and V.2 and the progress of Aviation have made those sentiments completely obsolete long ago Even Lord Baldwin admitted, in 1936, that the Rhine was our frontier, although, of course, he did nothing about it! To-day our frontier is the Vistula, to-morrow it may be the Dniepr. In the underground war in Germany, which will follow the defeat of her regular armies in the field, the support of these 100 million people living between Russia and Germany may well prove decisive. In any event, all Europe is now so near that, whether we like it or not, we are both in and of it; and that intimately. For our own material safety, therefore, as well as for every moral resaon, such as honour between man and man and regard for treaties and for the whole fabric of our European civilisation, I say to the Government that the moment has come to say to our great Ally Russia that she must treat Poland as what she is, a civilised, Christian, European nation, and not as if she was a paltry Asiatic tribe of Uzbegs or Tajiks. Firm and definite language now will save a deal of mounting troubles later on.

"Lastly, I will make a personal appeal to the Prime Minister. In many Polish towns to-day the principal street is called Churchill Street, because he is looked up to by the Poles as the saviour of Poland and of Europe In martyred Warsaw, during the last rising against the Germans, twenty barricades in Churchill Street alone were soaked in Polish blood. That happened because they believed that, whatever might happen to them, he at least would see that in the end Poland was free I cannot believe that, when history comes to award his due to the greatest Englishman since Chatham, it will say, ' But he deserted Poland ! "

Mr. Ivor Thomas (*Labour*) · "Friendship with the Soviet Union is the first essential for the existence of an independent Polish state; and the friendship of the Soviet Union, the United States, and ourselves is essential for the maintenance of world peace . . . This Polish problem is the most intractable in the whole field of our foreign relations at present. I have never risen to speak with such a heavy heart as I do to-day. It is melancholy to think that, after more than five years of fighting, in a war which we entered

to defend the independence of Poland, we should be debating whether Poland is to be a State at all For, make no mistake, that is the issue before us. . . . If, at the end of six years of fighting, we see the causes for which we entered the war trampled underfoot, then, indeed, that case will be very much strengthened, and it will lead to a sense of cynicism and shame which will make it very difficult to get the people of this country to go to war again, however sacred the cause And the Prime Minister's speech has left me with a feeling that the future is very uncertain. That speech was composed of the dragon's teeth which are said to be the seeds of future wars . the frontier question is not the most important one, and it is not, but, even so, there are certain considerations which I think ought to be borne in mind. The hon Gentleman the Senior Burgess for Cambridge University (Mr. Pickthorn), was perfectly right when he said that the Prime Minister was not reproducing correctly the British attitude after the last war. The facts can be stated quite briefly. On 8th September, 1919, when the Supreme Council first proposed what later became known as the 'Curzon Line,' it was simply proposed as a line behind which the Polish Government could get on with its administration, leaving the sovereignty of territories east of that line to be settled later. It is true that on 11th July, 1920, Mr. Lloyd George, in conversation with Mr. Grabski, indicated that line as the legitimate frontier of Poland, but, on the next day, 12th July, when Lord Curzon communicated this line officially to the Polish Government, it was not as a frontier, but as a temporary line of demarcation along which hostilities might cease; it was not the case that this Line was proposed as a permanent frontier between the two countries.

" . . . What is proposed by the Prime Minister is that Poland should be shifted bodily westwards The right hon. Gentleman did not seem to realise all the problems which that would involve for Poland She is already involved in considerable hostility with the Soviet Union, and, if anything is calculated to make a permanent enemy of Germany, it is such a proposal. I do not say that it should not be carried out, it looks to me as though it will have to be, but it is certainly going to create immense problems for Poland, and, if the Allies urge the Polish Government to adopt such a solution, they must do one thing more—they must give a joint and several guarantee to Poland That raises formidable problems for us, because we are traditionally averse to giving such guarantees But we have no right to urge on Poland a solution bristling with such difficulties unless we are prepared to make our own contribution to it.

" The Prime Minister has said that, if the Poles had agreed to the 'Curzon Line' as a frontier—and, really, I wish we could drop the name 'Curzon Line', why not call it the Supreme Council line, because 'Curzon' is a misleading name and has done much harm—if the Poles had adopted the Supreme Council Line, the Lublin Committee would not have been set up We have no assurance of that, and I am extremely doubtful myself whether that would have been the case. We are not without experience in this matter Let us consider the case of General Sosnkowski . . When the Poles acceded to British pressure and dropped General Sosnkowski and appointed General Bór in his place, what happened? Within a few hours, General Bór, to whom no one in this assembly is fit to hold a candle, was denounced by the Lublin Committee as a traitor, and the head of this Committee had the impudence to suggest that he should be brought to trial for his life . . The right hon. Gentleman admitted that Poland, under these proposals, would lose a great deal of territory. I think the right hon. Gentleman under-estimated the amount, because I think it is as large as 46.5 per cent. of the area and one third of her population. The Prime

Minister said it contained the large areas of the Pripet Marshes, which are of no value to anybody I would point out that it also includes the only oilfield in Poland and valuable deposits of phosphates, which are immaterial to Russia but of great value to Poland.

Mr. Price : " Would my hon. Friend bear in mind that the Polish population of this territory is quite a minority ? "

Mr. Thomas : " When my hon. Friend says a minority, he is speaking of a figure just short of 50 per cent. The question which I would like to put to him is : Why does he assume that the Soviet Union alone has the right to be a multi-national State ? There are many nationalities in the Soviet Union—about 200—and why should there not be two or three nationalities in Poland ? I cannot see the force of the argument that the Soviet Union has the right to include all Ruthenians and all Ukrainians—— It is claimed, on strategic grounds, that the Russian frontier should be extended to the West. That may be right and inevitable, but it makes nonsense of the Atlantic Charter . . . I do not believe that the proposal will produce security, which must be based on a general organisation for peace and, still more, on confidence and mutual trust between the nations. I think we ought to have urged upon the Soviet Union that she should attempt to secure the peace in a different way. In any case, if the Soviet Union is afraid of further aggression from Germany, it is very hard that Poland should be the sufferer. . . . There is, however, one thing we can do, and that is to get a firm pledge from the Government that they will not recognise the Lublin Committee We are entitled to get a firm assurance from them that they will continue to recognise the Polish Government of which Mr. Arciszewski is the head in London . . . as the only Government of Poland I agree with an earlier speaker that it would be idle to go into the personal lives of the members of the Lublin Committee, but I think I may say that, if ever it become a Government, it would be the most curious medley since the administration of Uncle Tom Cobleigh It is a Government composed of one party and one party only, nine out of the fourteen members of it are avowed members of the Communist Party It is true that the Union of Polish Patriots, out of which it has arisen, is said to be composed of a very large number of different parties, but we in the Labour Party at least are sufficiently familiar with that technique. We have learnt to recognise the Communist Party under many different names, and at any rate nine out of the fourteen members of the Lublin Committee are open members of the Communist Party. The Polish Government is solidly based on four parties which, in pre-war times, could count on the support of 80 per cent. of the electorate against the two per cent. of the Polish Communist Party. The Polish Communist Party was so infected with Trotskyism that in 1937 it had to be disbanded and it does not dare, even now, to call itself the Communist Party, but calls itself instead the Polish Workers' Party.

" It is perhaps appropriate here to say something—because the Prime Minister referred to it—about the composition of the present Polish Government . . Here I would like to address something to my Socialist colleagues in this House . I cannot lightly abandon a Government which has a Socialist at its head with such a distinguished record as Mr. Arciszewski, and includes such men as Dr. Prager and Mr. Kwapinski, supported by such men as Mr. Ciolkosz At our Labour Party Conference they have no doubt been singing to-day about ' dungeons dark,' but these men have lived in ' dungeons dark.' Mr. Kwapinski was sentenced to death on one occasion for his Socialist beliefs and only his tender years secured commutation to imprisonment. Mr. Arciszewski was leading strikes at the age of 13, and taking part in the revolution of 1905 before I was born . . . I was saying

and I do not think it can be refuted, that not one of us Socialist Members of Parliament in this Chamber—not even my right hon. Friend the Member for East Edinburgh (Mr. Pethick-Lawrence) who has had some experience of prison, which most of us have not—is fit to hold a candle to such men as Mr. Arciszewski, Mr. Kwapinski, Dr. Prager and the others It is alleged that they are undemocratic, and they are said to be committed to the undemocratic constitution of 1935. I would point out to my hon. Friends on these benches that two of the Socialist Ministers were put in prison for their stand against the Pilsudski regime and General Kukiel was dismissed from his post for his opposition to it There is not the slightest reason, therefore, to doubt that this Polish Government is a really diplomatic Government in the sense in which we understand the word, and that it has given the most practical proofs of its democratic faith

" I said that I would deal with the suggestion of the hon. Lady the Member for the Combined English Universities (Miss Rathbone) that there might be some compromise between this Government and the Lublin Committee. I understand that certain proposals of that nature have been made, but they remind me very much of the rabbit pie which was 50 per cent. rabbit and 50 per cent. horse, that is to say, one rabbit, one horse. The proposal, as I understand it, would give such a preponderance to the Lublin Committee that it would, in fact, simply be the Lublin Committee . . The most important thing I wish to say is this The Polish problem is almost insuperably difficult . . It may very well be that no satisfactory solution can be achieved, but may I ask for one thing ? It is, that they should not urge upon the Polish Government a solution which does not command itself to their consciences on its merits . . The wicked thing to my mind was that we tried to compel the Czech Government to accept a solution which we knew was immoral, and that is the danger I see in this present situation, that His Majesty's Government should try to urge upon the Polish Government something which they know to be wrong . . If His Majesty's Government cannot secure a settlement, then let us not urge anything else upon the Poles Let us, as the United States appears to be doing, refrain from making any recommendations which we cannot commend to our own consciences

" We are bound deeply in this matter by our interests and by our honour. I say ' Our interests ' not only in any narrow sense, for I do not suppose that British citizens have any considerable material interests in Poland. Our interests are of a different order. The greatest of all, order throughout the world, and the Polish problem is the most serious threat to that order we have yet faced. If we cannot solve it justly and generously, the outlook for the future is indeed dark. We are bound also in honour by engagement we have signed."

Lieut.-Colonel Sir Walter Smiles (*Conservative*) . " I can only speak on this matter as an average Britisher, but at the same time I should like later to speak as I think the average Pole is thinking. I have no particular knowledge of Poland, having been there only two or three times, and all my sympathies are on the side of Russia, because of the many kindnesses which I have received from Russian people. . but at the present moment what has happened in Poland ? What is the average British person thinking ? He thinks that Poland has been murdered, thinks it has been murdered largely by the Germans, and also that many Poles have been murdered by the Russians. He thinks, rightly or wrongly, that a million Poles have been deported to Siberia and elsewhere , and those who have been sent to Siberia will be very fortunate if half of them ever see their homes or their relations again . . .

" I want us to keep our feet upon the ground ; not to think of the world as

we would like it to be, but as it really is in 1944. Who is going to settle the western frontiers of Russia? Who is going to decide how much of Finland Russia will take, how much of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania, how much of Poland; how much of Hungary, Czecho-Slovakia and Rumania? At any rate let us distinguish between those countries, let us remember those which fought with us and those which fought against us. I have every sympathy with those Polish statesmen who would not sign that agreement. It might have been very much better for this country if many of our statesmen had not signed these various agreements . . . If I were one of those Polish statesmen, I would refuse to sign that agreement unless the United States of America, this country and the British Dominions signed at the same time

"We signed a pact to protect Czecho-Slovakia—that was when the late Mr Neville Chamberlain went to Munich—and Hitler broke it in March, 1939, when he marched into Prague. It is no use our signing anything which we cannot guarantee. We signed a pact to defend Poland. Have we done so? Goodness knows how many millions of Poles have died since we signed that pact, and we should be so advised not to sign any more pacts unless we are sure we can carry them out. But if the United States of America sign also it is a very different matter. The hon Member for South-East Essex (Mr Raikes) spoke about ghosts I think the ghost of Woodrow Wilson may be abroad just now. He signed a pact in the Treaty of Versailles, and when he went home to America the Americans rolled him in the gutter. It seems that we need more than the Prime Minister or the President of the United States to sign a pact, and I would say to the Poles, 'Be very careful if there is to be a pact that the pact will be kept.'

"What about our Dominions? I never heard that there was any great enthusiasm on their part to come in with us at the time of Munich, but they did come in with us most wholeheartedly and gallantly when the Germans marched into Poland . . If these various countries do come in and sign on the dotted line to guarantee the frontiers of Poland they would be very well advised to agree to this. I would not mind seeing those people transferred if we were sure that once they had been transferred they would be protected from the hatred of Germany and others who may perhaps be jealous of them.

Mr. Petherick (*Conservative*). " . . . When I listened to the Prime Minister to-day, I could not help noticing the feeling of the House, as one so often can. Instead of, as we have so often seen recently, cheers and counter cheers for or against the Prime Minister's policy, we heard, all the way through his speech, hardly a cheer and a sort of awful ugly, apprehenisve cold, silence. That was significant, and the speeches that have followed have justified the idea which one had of the way in which this House and the country are feeling in this matter. I am sure that the speeches of my hon and gallant Friend the Member for South-East Essex (Mr. Raikes), the Senior Burgess for Cambridge University (Mr. Pickthorn) and the hon. Member for Keighley (Mr. Ivor Thomas) and, last, but not least, of the hon. Lady the Member for the Combined English Universities (Miss Rathbone), I believe represented the real voice of Britain

"Let us consider the situation. My hon. Friend the Member for South-East Essex asked what would have been thought in 1940, supposing we had been told in this House what was going to happen. I will take it back another year. Suppose the late Prime Minister, Mr. Neville Chamberlain, announcing the British declaration of war on behalf of His Majesty's Government on 3rd September, 1939, had said, finishing his speech · " In five years' time, this Poland, which we have come into the war to defend, will be severed, and half will be offered to another Power." It is a horrifying thought, that one

dare hardly even contemplate

" I should have liked to refer to the question of the Baltic States, because I believe that their future and the future of Poland are bound up closely together . . . the situation in the Baltic States now controlled by Russia is a very serious and a very ugly one. If hon. Members would get the most recent Bulletin of the Institute of International Affairs and will read the part which deals with the four countries, I think they will have an eye-opener. I believe that Poland should engage our attention even more, because Poland is a test case, not only of what is going to happen between now and the end of the war but of the peace treaties, when we come to that period.

" Poland is entitled to full respect from the people of this country. It is not only because, as many hon. Members have said, she has fought so gallantly in the war and not only because we came into the war to defend Poland against German aggression, but also because she is a very ancient State which, in spite of four partitions, has still maintained within its borders a strong people, speaking a distinct language and with a strong and powerful racial sense In spite of all those vicissitudes, she is determined to remain an independent nation. After all those terrible times that they have had, in the last 200 years—and indeed before, when they were standing up to the Asiatic hordes—when Poland was attacked by Germany she was the first country in Europe which stood up and fought, because she was determined not to be overrun by German aggressors. She fought with very little hope, but she fought it six weeks in circumstances of great gallantry.

" Now we are asked, and our attention is focussed upon this possibility of handing over half Poland, that is to say, up to the Curzon Line, to Russia I am not going to ask whether the peoples on the East of the Curzon Line are Russian or mainly Pole and I do not agree with the hon. Member who spoke earlier as to racial alignment It is not necessary, for the reason that, on four successive occasions, treaties have been made, freely entered into, by the Russian Government and by the Polish Government on the matter. It was first laid down in the Treaty of Riga in 1921, and then confirmed in the treaties of 1932, 1934 and 1941, what those boundaries were. After 1921, at the time of the Treaty of Riga, the boundaries were never in dispute on any occasion Why then are they in dispute now? There can be only one answer I beg His Majesty's Government to look at the crude realities. There can be only one answer why they are in dispute now, and that is *because Russia says she wants that particular territory* It is the only, the inescapable, conclusion, that we can draw from that

" Since 1921, Russo-Polish relations have been, on the whole, fairly good until of course in 1939 when that unfortunate affair happened, when Russia entered Poland behind the back of the Polish Armies, and seized a certain portion of Polish territory Then, after that, relations again happily improved when, as a result of the German attack on Russia, Russian views on these matters underwent a very great change In General Sikorski's premiership, as we all know—and this is important—a Treaty, the fourth Treaty, was freely entered into between Poland and Russia which read as follows . ' The Government of the U S S R recognise the Soviet-German Treaty of 1939 as to territorial changes in Poland as having lost their validity.' The result of that Treaty was clearly to undo the effects of the Russian action in 1939 and to revert to Poland's pre-war frontiers. At that time the present Secretary of State welcomed that agreement · ' His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom has not undertaken any obligations to the U S S R. which would affect the relations between that State and Poland. I also desire to state that His Majesty's Government does not recognise any territorial change made in Poland since August, 1939 '

I would like to ask, for what reason have they departed from that perfectly explicit statement of their views? There was further, the Anglo-Polish Treaty made on 25th August, 1939, as a result of which we came into the war. I would like to ask my right hon. Friend a further question on this Treaty. Some of us know that there was an unpublished protocol to that Treaty, a protocol I have seen with my own eyes It did not come into my hands from any Polish source, there was no breach of faith on the part of anyone. That protocol, if I read it correctly, and I believe I did, further reinforces the obligation of His Majesty's Government to the Polish nation. . . In addition, we have the Atlantic Charter . . The Prime Minister, in his interpretation of the Atlantic Charter to-day, got the wording all wrong It was not at all what the Atlantic Charter says. It says that they, that is, the high contracting parties, 'desire to see no territorial changes that do not accord with the freely-expressed wishes of the people concerned' How can the peoples freely express their wishes on the question of frontiers or Governments? They can only do so by means of free elections, not free elections under a regime which would only allow one party to offer themselves for election, but free elections as we understand them in this country—that is the only way, to my mind, in which we are to fulfil not the spirit but the actual terms of the Atlantic Charter, and can allow any part of Europe to be changed except, of course, enemy countries

"I come to the Curzon Line because I believe that relations have, unfortunately, steadily deteriorated in the last few months since the mention of the Curzon Line. We only heard of that immediately after the Conference at Teheran, when the Prime Minister, for the first time, in my opinion highly unfortunately, made mention of the Curzon Line in the House of Commons What is the Curzon Line? If you go about talking to people outside this House who ought to be quite well informed, they have the idea from this name that it must be something respectable, an honest Conservative view given by an honest Conservative statesman, as to where a line of demarcation between Poland and Russia should be drawn. What was the Curzon Line? It was on 8th December, 1919, that the Supreme Allied Council in Paris made this declaration, in view of the chaos in Eastern Europe and the fighting on the Polish frontiers as the result of all kinds of terrible results coming from the war. They thought it best to make a declaration that the Polish Government then in being should have the right to form a Government and administer territory up to a certain suggested line.

"I would draw the attention of the House to this There was a very distinct proviso, which I can quote in the original French, if anybody would like me to do so, which said that that line up to which the Polish Government was entitled to take over and administer the territory was without prejudice to the ultimate stipulations which will fix the definite Eastern frontiers of Poland. The Russian Polish war went on for some time until Mr Grabski in 1920 agreed to sign an immediate armistice on the basis that 'the Polish Army retires to and stands on the line fixed by the Peace Conference'—that was the declaration of 8th December, 1919, as the administrative boundary up to which the then Polish Government was allowed to operate—'as the provisional boundary of Polish administration, and that the Soviet Armies halt fifty kilometres to the east of that line' As a result of that, the next day His Majesty's Government made a proposal to Russia, the terms of which are now being considered by the House

"It seems to make it perfectly plain that, at every stage, the Curzon Line was nothing more or less than an armistice line, and the statement of the Allied Powers in 1919 made it clear that this boundary which was roughly the Curzon Line up to which the Polish Government were allowed to take

over was only a provisional line and not in the least definite . . .

" Mention has been made of the Lublin Committee I leave that, because, in my opinion, the question of the Lublin Committee is much less important than the question of frontiers, for this reason A country cannot have independence, it cannot have an independent Government, unless its frontiers are assured, and in my opinion the Lublin Committee was never regarded seriously by the Russians and was merely put up as a stalking horse to give what they thought they wanted so far as boundaries were concerned. I think my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State, and, indeed, the Prime Minister, in Moscow were perhaps not very wise in paying too much attention to and in treating the Lublin Committee too seriously as they appear to have done. The Lublin Committee is utterly fictitious, and the Russians know perfectly well, just the same as everybody else does, that the Lublin Committee is bogus and was utterly unnecessary except in order to achieve a certain ulterior purpose

" What is the final suggestion ? It is that Poland is to lose half her territory, and that she will lose one-third of her population. Apparently the plea is that that is necessary in order to give defence in depth to Moscow We, whose armies, with the American Armies, are engaged in operations for the defence of the Low Countries, might just as well say that we, who have experienced war at the gates of our country, will remain in occupation there after this war, because we require defence in depth for London. What a cry would arise, not only from the Belgians but from the French, our own people, and indeed the Russians, if we made such a monstrous suggestion "

Mr. Austin Hopkinson (*Mossley*) " My hon Friend has forgotten another point, which would make his analogy complete. Not only should we take part of the country which we have occupied, but, also, we should say to the Government of the remainder of the country that they would meet only with our approval."

Mr. Petherick : " . It is suggested that East Prussia should be given to Poland as compensation But the Poles do not want East Prussia as compensation. It is the same as if you took away East Anglia from Britian, and gave it to Germany, and offered us Normandy instead. It is a monstrous suggestion . . If Great Britain, America, Russia, and France can stand together, the peace of Europe is assured for 100 years to come, but if all that happens is that one aggressor is completely ground in the dust and there is another aggressor arising in Europe, we cannot look forward to peace, not only for a 100 years, but for a single day. The greatest British interest is British honour, and we were deeply committed to Poland when we came into this war. There will be no peace in Europe, or in the world, unless, as a result of the Russian policy in respect of Poland, it is clear to the whole world that power is only the man-at-arms of justice "

The Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Mr. Eden) : " I come to the main issue of the Debate, the Polish-Soviet relations and the problem that underlies them I do not hesitate to say, from the point of view of His Majesty's Government, that this has been for the last three years, or a little more, the most vexatious and anxious problem with which we have to deal. It is not only that it is of the greatest importance that Allied unity should be maintained, and that it cannot be effectively maintained unless our Allies are in general agreement , it is not only because it is important to us who are allied to both those countries that there should be some understanding between them, but it is because, unless there is some understanding, we find it difficult to see how there can be confidence, settlement and peace in Eastern Europe, when this war is over ; and if there be not

this confidence, then the repercussions will be felt by us all.

" Both these countries, I have said, are our Allies. We entered this war of our own free-will, by our own deed, in fulfilment of our guarantees to Poland . . . We have, as the war has progressed, felt a growing, not only esteem, but affection for our Polish Allies . for those we have known, and for those we have seen in this country, and for their armed forces, and for the gallantry of the part that they have played There is something more than that , we have seen also that, of all the countries that have been under the harrow of this war, Poland has, perhaps suffered most of all.

" On the other side, we have our 20 years' treaty with Russia We understand, and we believe that they understand and other nations understand, how much the future peace of Europe is going to depend upon our ability to work together and to understand each other. We remember that in three great wars we have fought together on the same side in the end, although we may not have begun as Allies, and that after each of them, we have fallen apart. We know that if that happens again, the prospects for the peace of Europe are very frail indeed. Those considerations have to be in our minds when we face this problem as we have to face it now.

" So it is that, ever since the German attack on Russia in the summer of 1941, we have laboured unceasingly to try to solve these Polish-Soviet differences We have not been successful always, but we have been successful sometimes It was here in London, actually in my room at the Foreign Office, that the Soviet-Polish Treaty was signed, in the summer of 1941. Despite a chequered history, many differences, arguments, criticisms and charges and counter-charges, that Treaty did stand until February last year, when it was denounced—I do not know whether ' denounced ' is the right word—or when, rather, it was regarded as in abeyance by the Soviet Government Ever since then, we have tried to bring about a resumption of relations Sometimes we seemed to be almost in sight of the goal and at others the prospects became gloomy again . Now I have to report that the prospects are not as good as they have been, but we shall continue to do all we can to secure a strong and independent Poland as our Ally, and, as we trust, the Ally of Soviet Russia . . . I want to deal with another point that has been made There has never been, I must emphasise, in this discussion in London, from the Soviet side, any suggestion that, as a result of any arrangement which might be made between Russia and ourselves, Poland's links with the West should in any way be modified or affected. On the contrary, Marshal Stalin emphasised to M. Mikolajczyk his desire that the Treaty with ourselves and the Polish treaty with France and relations that were possible between Poland and the United States, subject to the constitutional position of the United States, should be continued and if need be reinforced. I think he has said that publicly and I think that should be stressed because it is not in my judgment true to suggest that the Soviet Government desires that the Polish State and Government should be, as it were, in her orb and have no territorial or political links with other Governments

" I come to slightly more controversial ground. I shall try to give a brief account and I hope an accurate account of the story of the Curzon Line . What was the origin of this Line ? It was originally drawn up by the Commission on Polish Affairs of the Paris Supreme Council. They drew it up to make the eastern limit of what was indisputably Polish territory so that the Polish Government could immediately take over the administration in that area without question, even while the position in relation to Russia was obscure. That was in 1919, and the proposal became associated with Lord Curzon's name only a year later, when this proposal was pulled

out, as it were, again, and put before the two parties as an attempt to bring hostilities to an end . It is fair to say that it was from the outset only intended to show the minimum amount of territory which should be assigned to Poland in the east. It is also true to say that the British delegation at the Peace Conference consistently maintained that any further eastward extension of Polish territory beyond the Curzon Line would be highly dangerous to Poland, and before the Treaty of Riga was signed in 1921, we several times warned the Polish Government against such extensions.

Mr. Ivor Thomas : " Is the Secretary of State able to confirm that the Soviet Foreign Minister, Chicherin, replied to Lord Curzon that the Curzon Line was unacceptable because it was too unfavourable to the Poles ?

Mr. Eden : " I am familiar with that one It is absolutely correct, and the reason for that was that in the belief of the Soviet Government at that time a district which I think is called Chelm was thought by the Soviet Government to be on the Russian side of the Curzon Line,* and they said, and rightly said, that that was Polish territory, and they did not agree with the Curzon Line in regard to that particular area.

" I go to the next stage which is significant—August, 1920 At that time, the opposite happened to what had happened before. While at the earlier date the Curzon Line was proposed to the Soviet Government by us with the approval of the Polish Government, at the later stage to which I am referring the Soviet Government, in their turn, approached the Polish Government with a proposal—which was approximately in fact the Curzon Line—and the Polish Government asked our opinion. We then told the Polish Government in 1920—the Soviet Government having communicated to us the text of the terms—that we considered such terms would leave ethnological frontier unimpaired, and we urged them, the Polish Government, not to refuse these terms †

" I would like to refer to another matter which I think we must try and

* It could not have been the Chelm district, since Chelm lies to the west of the river Bug in central Poland

† On July 17th, 1920, Chicherin sent a telegraphic reply to Lord Curzon's proposals The Soviet Government rejected these proposals on the grounds that they considered it superfluous that the governments grouped in the League of Nations should interfere in the matter of the peace between Russia and Poland. On the contrary, the Soviet Government desired to negotiate with Poland direct and was prepared in that event to grant her a more advantageous line than that proposed by Lord Curzon That paragraph in Chicherin's reply ran as follows —

" Direct negotiations with Poland are in full harmony with the wishes of the Soviet Government and it declares, therefore, that if the Polish Government addressed to Russia the proposal of entering into peace negotiations, the Soviet Government will not reject its proposal and will also consider in the most friendly spirit any subsidiary proposal as to an armistice or some other means meant to facilitate peace negotiations The Soviet Government expresses also its willingness to agree to a territorial frontier more favourable to the Polish people than frontiers indicated by the Supreme Council in December last and again proposed by the British Government in its ultimatum of July 12th The Soviet Government cannot leave without notice the fact that this frontier was elaborated by the Supreme Council in some parts under the pressure of counter-revolutionary Russian elements, adherents of Russian capitalist and landed class "

This attitude on the part of the Soviet Government was repeated in Kamenev's letter to Lloyd George on August 5th, 1920, in which he also stressed that the Soviet Government " abide most firmly by their recognition of the freedom and independence of Poland and also by their readiness to give the Polish state wider frontiers than those suggested by the Supreme Council and communicated in the British Note of July 10th."

(See Vol. I, p. 95).

get into the right perspective—the problem of Galicia. In the extension of the Curzon Line to the south, two alternatives were recommended to the Supreme Council's Commission on Polish affairs . There were two proposals One was line A, which is the line that the Soviet Government now claim as the basis of the frontier itself Line A was proposed as the boundary between Poland proper and an autonomous Eastern Galicia, which it was hoped to set up under the suzerainty of Poland Line B, further to the East, which left Lwów to Poland, was recommended if the bulk of Eastern Galicia was excluded from Poland and the autonomous State under her suzerainty was not created

" Our delegation favoured Line A—the line which the Soviet Government are now asking for—and it was eventually adopted by the Supreme Council, and embodied in the draft Treaty. Of the reasons which actuated us at that time, one was the economic position in that part of Europe and the necessity, as those who reported thought, of keeping this economic area of Eastern Galicia as a whole. The second reason was the possibility that there might be there a larger independent State, perhaps as part of a great Ukraine I think the final reason was the population problem. At that time the population of this area between Line A and Line B, which is, as far as territorial matters go, the crux of the dispute—if our Polish friends could get Line B their attitude would probably be modified a good deal, and personally I can well understand their attitude—the populations at that time were, out of a total of about 1,500,000, there were over 500,000 Ukrainians, little more than 250,000 Poles, and the rest Jews. I think that was the reason why those concerned at that time had in mind to try and arrange some autonomous regime

" I would like to ask the House for a moment to look at the population problem generally in the area between the Riga frontier and the Curzon Line taking Line A. The figures I shall give are those of the 1931 Polish census. They are the latest figures available to us though likely enough there have been very considerable changes since then. They showed that the population in that area, in what might be called the disputed area, was 10,700,000. Of that total, 3.900,000 are Polish-speaking population ; 3,200,000 are Roman Catholic population I think those who are authorities on these matters say, usually, the religious figures are rather nearer to the mark than the language speaking figures, because, for instance, Jews might be Polish-speaking Jews who would be included in one and not the other. That is about the figure—at the most 3,900,000, at the least 3,200,000 It would be fair to say, therefore, that, while there are no later figures than those of 1931, the Poles have never constituted much more than a third of the total population of this area."

Commander Agnew (*Camborne*) " Has my right hon Friend any figures for Lwow itself ? "

Mr. Eden : " . . My view is that there is certainly a Polish majority in Lwów itself I have always taken that view, though in the surrounding country there is a Ukrainian majority.

" Let me turn to the present situation, and its difficulties. First, I would like to answer a question on supplies, by my hon. and gallant Friend the Member for The Wirral (Captain Graham). This matter is now being examined by the Prime Minister and myself, with our technical advisors. I am unable to say exactly what we shall do in the winter months, but it is under examination, and it is on the basis of what we can do that we shall decide our action."

Mr. Petherick : " . . My right hon Friend : has not mentioned the Treaty of Riga, which was the final arrangement between Poland and Russia

and which always operated until 1939 ? "

Mr. Eden : " . . . My point is that the story of this area is a long-disputed one . . . It is true that the Russians accepted the Treaty—nobody disputes that. But you cannot say, ' This is where I take my stand, and I refuse to go back any further '—if you do, it will be impossible to reach a settlement. It is quite true that it was our initiative—the Prime Minister's and mine—at Moscow which raised this Polish question once again We went to Moscow with the fullest intention of talking about it, and of putting our point of view to our Russian Ally . . . The first thing we asked was whether M. Grabski and M. Mikolajczyk, who had been parties to the conversations before, could come to Moscow again That proposition was at once accepted, on the first night of our arrival, by M Stalin and M Molotov ; and they came to Moscow I had hoped—I do not deny that—that, as a result of this discussion, a measure of agreement would arise large enough to enable the conversations to continue, and a final settlement to be reached. But after M. Mikolajczyk got back the Polish Government was reconstituted, and those hopes have been disappointed.

" My hon Friend the Member for South-East Essex (Mr. Raikes), asked whether I could say a little more about the Moscow conversations . . . First, my hon. Friend said that the Polish Government were asked to give up at once, and go into the nebulous future, with uncertainty as to what Poland will get. If that were the position, I would agree that it would be quite an unacceptable one from the Polish point of view. But that was not the position. The position was that concessions—I do not like that word, let us say frontier changes, would be made. There was absolute agreement between us and the Russians, as well as the Poles, on the changes there should be in the West. The Poles would not be committed to the Curzon Line unless, as a result of these discussions, agreement was finally reached, and the Polish Government, headed by M. Mikolajczyk, went into Poland and took up their position there. There was no question of our asking the Poles to give up something without agreement being reached. There was also the question of the composition of the Committee, on which my hon. Friend asked whether they were going to be 75 per cent or not "

Mr. Raikes : " Surely the position was not quite that the Poles were at once to receive compensation in the West, and that the whole thing hung together with the Curzon Line , because the Russians had already got into possession of Eastern Poland, and, whatever might be said at Moscow, the Poles could not get the suggested compensation anyhow until the Germans had been defeated ? "

Mr. Eden : " But the very fact that the Russians were in possession was one of the reasons why we wanted to get agreement I will explain why. I do not know what the Lublin Committee may have wanted, but I think it had never entered our heads to think that such an arrangement would be possible for a moment In fact, the only thing that was agreed about the future composition of the Polish Government was that M Mikolajczyk himself should be Prime Minister That was one thing about which everybody seemed to be agreed—ourselves, the Russians, the Lublin Committee, and the Polish Government in London.

" I come to a question which I do not think has played a great part—and which should have played a greater part . . That is the Corridor . . . I have taken the view for many years, as an individual, that it is impossible for the Polish State to have an independent national life with the Corridor system perpetuated. . . . Some people seem to think, quite wrongly, that the Corridor was German. It was not ; the population of the Corridor was Polish But, even so, the cross-traffic and the endless problems of the Free City of

Danzig, and the growing *herrenvolk* attitude of the German officials towards Poles, made it absolutely impossible for there to be any arrangement on those lines . . . In conclusion, I want to say a word about the movement of population . . I do not think it is impossible, and, if it is the only way to solve this problem of the Corridor, as I am convinced it is, then we have got to face it The House should remember that there were certain populations of Polish descent when East Prussia was under Polish suzerainty.

" Now I come to the question of what we are going to do now If I may say so, of the comments and the criticisms I have heard, there has only been one alternative policy suggested, which was to wait until the Peace Conference to settle these matters and to hold our hands meanwhile and make no commitment . . . One of my hon Friends asked why we did not do that originally ? My reply is that we foresaw this position arising, with Russian armies advancing through Poland, with no understanding whatever with the Polish Government, which we were convinced represented majority opinion in Poland, and with no arrangements of any kind, no civil affair agreement other than some administration being set up to carry on the Government somehow, or else it being done direct by the Russians. We saw all the friction which would inevitably result We knew, because the Russians told us this, that they were prepared to make, with M. Mikolajczyk's Government, if the frontier could be settled, an arrangement similar to the one they had with the Czechs and similar to the one we have with the Belgian, the Dutch and the French."

Mr. Petherick : " May I point out that that is not an absolutely fair analogy ? We are advancing through Holland and Belgium now, but not claiming the right to annex Holland and Belgium "

Mr. Eden : " My hon. Friend has not understood my observation What I said was that if we could have got an understanding between the Soviets and M. Mikolajczyk's Government we knew the Soviet Government would make a civil affairs agreement with the Polish Government on the same lines as we have made one with the Belgians and the French. Such an agreement should have provided for the setting up of a Polish administration which would have the confidence of the Polish people, and we should have avoided those incidents and troubles, perhaps serious troubles, which we are likely to see when there is no agreement That is the reason why we took this risk, and, if you like, burnt our fingers, but it was a case in which, if we had not made this attempt, there would inevitably have been these difficulties

" What is the position now ? . . I must honestly say that, at present, the prospects of agreement are pretty bleak. They are, honestly, not as good between this Polish Government and the Soviet as they were between the previous Polish Government and the Soviet Government, but if there was any opportunity, despite the risks, and I know what they are, I think it would still be our duty to try . . . It is quite likely that we shall fail and not get another opportunity. If that happens, what is our position ? We recognise this Government here in London as we recognised its predecessor. The subject will then have to wait for the Peace Conference . . "

On the day following the debate, Arciszewski replied to Churchill in an interview in the *Sunday Times*·

" I still believe that all outstanding problems could be settled provided the right atmosphere for discussions was created and the proper methods for settling international questions were applied. I am aware that time is short, but a quick settlement may result in a short-lived success which may

fail to provide a lasting and satisfactory solution

" The Polish-Russian dispute can be divided into four parts : (1) guarantees for the re-establishment of a free, sovereign, independent, Polish State ; (2) the frontier problem , (3) civil administration in the territory liberated by the Red Army , and (4) future Polish-Russian relations.

" With regard to the first problem, I greatly appreciate all the favourable statements about the future of the Polish State made by Mr. Churchill and other members of His Majesty's Government in the House of Commons.

" But these do not seem to justify the amputation of the eastern part of Poland, which is not all marshland, but includes territory of vital importance. I believe we could base the future of a country faced with such enormous difficulties, only on international treaties of an explicit character. My Government intends, therefore, to do the utmost to obtain, first of all, formal Allied guarantees for the re-establishment of the Polish State When we have secured that, we can undertake the discussion of frontier adjustment

" I am aware that this problem is not an easy one But before accepting any definite frontier changes my Government has to obtain the consent of the Polish Underground State representing the people of Poland

" In spite of the German oppression, the Polish Underground has survived the Warsaw disaster, and is now again fully active . . . we are consulting them on all matters of State importance.

" We have put forward our claims against Germany and demanded the incorporation into Poland of East Prussia, Upper Silesia and parts of Pomerania, and we appreciate the positive attitude of the Allies, including Soviet Russia, who promised to help in this matter. But we do not want to expand our frontier in the west to include eight to ten million Germans. That is, we do not want either Breslau or Stettin We are claiming just our ethnical and historic Polish territories which are under German domination.

" When the full guarantee of our national existence is obtained, my Government should be able without any difficulty to deal with all other outstanding questions, such as those I have mentioned, including good neighbourly relations between Russia and Poland within the framework of general security in Europe and in the world "

Arciszewski's remark regarding ' Breslau and Stettin ' was not upheld by the National Democrat and Peasant Party and was an expression of his own personal opinion.

It seems pointless to quote the comments of the English Press on the conclusion of this debate. There was an endeavour to explain something which could not be explained within the meaning of democracy, i.e., might before right and that the weak should perish. G. K. Chesterton had once written : " We know what pardon and what peace will keep our little masters dumb. The men that sell what others make, as vultures eat what others lay, will prove in matching plume with plume, that nought is black and all is grey."

The regimented section of the British Press headed by *The Times* and supported by the *Daily Worker*, endeavoured to disguise the feeling of uneasiness by commencing an outcry against these " senseless Poles " and led a campaign of misrepresentation, concerning the actual situation with regard to Poland, repeating the Communist charges that the Polish

Government in London was Fascist, while the Poles generally were adverse to any unity among themselves, and what was more important, among the Allies . The Polish people and their Government were put in the stocks because they refused to submit to the Lublin Quislings, and, as *The Tablet* wrote ironically on 23rd December, 1944, " Dr. Johnson once related to his friends how he had seen a fish-monger skinning alive a conger-eel, and soundly cursing it for not keeping still. Impatience with a destined victim for not going quietly to destruction is a curious attitude, but it is to be discerned in those who do not conceal their impatience because the Polish Government is resisting instead of facilitating the Soviet designs on the life of its country."

As a result of Churchill's frequent references to the United States in his speech and the stir in the American Press, Washington, who had for so long maintained the strictest reserve regarding the Polish problem, felt impelled to explain its position. This statement appeared on 18th December, and by its indications showed that the United States wished to adhere to its previous attitude.

" The United States Government's position as regards Poland has been steadfastly guided by full understanding and sympathy for the interests of the Polish people This position has been communicated on previous occasions to the interested Governments, including the Government of Poland It may be summarised as follows :

" (1) The United States Government stands unequivocally for a strong, free, and independent Polish State, with the untrammelled right of the Polish people to order their internal existence as they see fit

" (2) It has been the consistently held policy of the United States Government that question relating to boundaries should be left in abeyance until the termination of hostilities. As Mr. Cordell Hull, then Secretary of State, stated in his address of April 9, 1944 ' This does not mean that certain questions may not and should not in the meantime be settled by friendly conference and agreement '

" In the case of the future frontiers of Poland, if mutual agreement is realised by the United Nations directly concerned, this Government would have no objection to such an agreement, which could make an essential contribution to the prosecution of the war against the common enemy.

" If, as a result of such an agreement, the Government and people of Poland decide that it would be in the interests of the Polish State to transfer national groups, the United States Government in co-operation with other Governments, will assist Poland in so far as is practicable in such transfers

" The United States Government continues to adhere to its traditional policy of declining to give guarantees for any specific frontiers.

" The United States Government is working for the establishment of a world security organisation through which the United States, together with other member States, would assume responsibility for the preservation of general security

" (3) It is the announced aim of the United States Government, subject to legislative authority, to assist countries liberated from the enemy in repairing the devastation of war and thus to bring to their peoples an opportunity to join as full partners in the task of building a more prosperous and secure life for all men and women. This applies to Poland as well as to other United Nations.

" The policy of the United States Government regarding Poland outlined above, has as its objective the attainment of the announced basic principles of United States foreign policy "

This general Statement meant, in effect, that the United States Government would continue to refrain from taking part in any active efforts to bring about a solution of the Russo-Polish crisis. Only if confronted with no other possibility would it decide to move . . . an event which was to shortly come about.

SOVIET RULE IN POLAND

" Don't Let Us Be Finally Exterminated "
(The Polish Underground Radio Station's appeal to the peoples of the world)

The failure of the statesmen of Downing Street to extract the consent of the Polish Government to the demands of Moscow resulted in the Kremlin again taking the initiative into its own hands. Following Churchill's speech of 15th December and the subsequent statement of Stettinius, Moscow considered that " the stock of the Polish Government had fallen extremely low," and the moment opportune to promote its ' Lublin Committee.' The Russian Press, according to the usual Soviet technique, reported " declarations of Trade Unions and all political parties, and numerous mass meetings " had been held (during the severe winter by starving people) in that part of Poland occupied by the Red Army (i.e., where all rights of citizens, including mass meetings, had been banned), demanding that the Committee " should assume governmental authority." These reports were published under the title of " the will of the Polish People." And, on 31st December, the Soviet National Council unanimously passed a ' law ' calling into being a ' Polish Provisional Government ' from the Committee of National Liberation (Lublin Committee). At the same time, the Chairman of the ' Council ' was assigned the title of " President of the Republic by acclamation."

Moscow informed London and Washington forthwith that she would not delay the official recognition of this ' Government.' London, however, requested the Soviet Government not to take any final step until the expected meeting of the Big Three had taken place. But Moscow determined to put the affair beyond any possibility of discussion at that meeting, hastened to give its recognition, informing London and Washington of its intentions to do so only on the eve of the event.*

This time the Kremlin had openly thrown down the challenge, it had formed this puppet exclusively from Communists and shadow figures unknown to the Polish public. Not one member of Moscow's ' Union of Polish Patriots ' now appeared in this ' Government," they had carried out their allotted task and—disappeared. Wasilewska, the first among

* *Sunday Dispatch*, January 7, 1945.

the ' Unionists,' had long ago been sent back to her novels. Berling had just disappeared. The new ' Cabinet ' was officially composed of four Communists who held the main portfolios, together with an equal number of members from Soviet-sponsored Peasant, Socialist and Democratic Parties, the latter party had never been heard of in Poland until now, and neither had any of these ' Cabinet Ministers.' The only figures retained from the ' Committee ' was Osubka (who now became the Prime Minister) and Zymierski.

As is well-known to all students of Soviet State organisation, the highest authority of that bureaucratic fabric was its ' Polit-bureau ' headed by Stalin. The same system was now applied in Poland, where the branch of Moscow's ' Polit-bureau,' comprising a few Comintern agents, the specialists in foreign affairs, began to function under Bierut in the name of the ' Political Committee of the Home National Council '

The policy of the ' Provisional Government ' proved to be identical with that of the ' Committee.' Osubka Morawski declared, at a meeting on January 2 of the ' National Home Council.'

" Our claims in the West for the return of the lands on the Oder, the Neisse (Lusatian) and the Baltic, which have forever been dear to the Motherland, have for long been regarded as justified by our Great Eastern ally, the U S.S R They have also found appreciation from the Prime Minister of Great Britain.

" We shall direct Poland's foreign policy into new channels. We are aiming consistently at turning the friendship and solidarity of the Slav nations into a constructive and fruitful factor in shaping political relations in the new Europe, and into one of the guarantees of collective security. We shall strive to extend and tighten friendly relations between Poland and our great neighbour, the U.S.S.R., to establish direct diplomatic relations and tighten the neighbourly bonds of friendship with the sister republics of the Soviet Ukraine, White Ruthenia and Lithuania This will make it easier for us to arrange for a reciprocal and voluntary exchange of populations, which will, radically and for all time, settle the tangle of nationalities in our country."

Zymierski used the opportunity to explain once more the basis of the ' Lublin Committee's ' alliance with the U.S.S.R. :

" Our alliance with the U.S.S R ," he said, " rests on a far-reaching convergence of the Polish and Soviet reasons of State The Polish reason of state demands that our eastern frontier should cease to be a seed of discord, a barrier between the two sister nations, and become a line of friendly neighbourhood As such we regard the ' Curzon Line ' We must expect that even in the future, after this war has been won, an aggressive Germany will await an opportune moment to fall upon us once more. But German imperialism will also remain an enemy of the Soviet Union. The military alliance with our powerful eastern neighbour assures us of his military aid and guarantees us the defence of our western frontier. Our national interests, namely, frontiers on a wide stretch of the Baltic, acquisition of territories on the Oder and the Neisse, undivided rule over the estuaries of the Vistula and the Oder, the liquidation of East Prussia, the return to Poland of the whole of Silesia—all this coincides with the Soviet Union's strategic interests."

He further elucidated how the ' Polish ' Army created by the Soviets was in the hands of the latter. " The problem of a corps of officers," said Zymierski, " fit to answer the requirements of our growing army, is one of considerable difficulty. And so, to form a new Polish Army, we applied to the U.S.S.R. for help Our powerful and friendly ally gave us many officers of Polish and others of Russian nationality . . . " The friendly ally had, in fact, given so many of these officers that every position from the top of the scale to a Commander of a battalion was a Russian. Zymierski, now, like Tito, promoted to the rank of Marshal remained the figurative C.-in-C., but the real Commander of these forces was, it seemed, his deputy for political affairs, first the ' politruk ' General Zawadski, and afterwards Spychalski, both from the troops of the N.K.V D. What, or whose interests, were served by this Soviet-Polish Force, can be judged by the fact that, from twenty-six high-ranking Generals enumerated in the Soviet Press as having been decorated by Bierut in May to mark the end of a victorious war, only three were Poles, one known to have been a sous-officer in the Polish Army before the war. The above-mentioned Poles were on the bottom rungs of the military ladder—the other men to receive decorations had come from the ranks of the N.K.V.D. or the Red Army, and promoted from Majors or Captains when they took up service in the Soviet-Polish Army.

The subject of the social education of the soldier was given the closest attention and a special Board of Political Education was set up Already by May, 1944, the Præsidium of the Union of Patriots had stated that :— " Tremendous political work had been done, resulting in the compactness, deep patriotism and genuine democratic spirit in the Polish Army in the U.S.S R."

Zymierski, in his speech, emphasised how, " thanks to the Communists in the positions of political officers in the Army, the Polish soldier was now more conscious of his duties towards the nation." " He is taught," reported *New York Times* Moscow correspondent from Lublin, " that the Polish Government in London did not want to wage war actively with the Germans and that its agents preferred the collaboration with the Nazis to collaboration with the Soviet Union."

Moscow hailed the ' Lublin Committee ' as the Polish Government in the typical Soviet manner. *Pravda* wrote, and London's *Soviet War News* republished.

" The transformation of the National Liberation Committee into a Provisional Polish Government has struck yet another heavy blow against Hitlerite Germany and her flunkeys. First among these is the emigre clique of Polish reactionaries which pretends to figure as the Polish Government. Political adventurers, whom the Polish people and international public opinion hold responsible for Poland's national calamities, have tried in vain to divert the Polish people from the correct path . . .

" While the Polish people were straining their forces, making their contribution to the common cause of the United Nations, the Polish emigre Government devoted all its efforts to criminal political intrigues under-

mining the unity of the anti-Hitler Coalition. It refused to recognise that the basic national interests of Poland demand friendship and collaboration with the Soviet Union. It refused a policy of rapprochement with the U.S S.R., a policy which was, and is, dictated by the Polish people's vital interests."

In connection with the transformation of the 'Lublin Committee' into the 'Provisional Government of the Polish Republic,' the Polish Government in London issued the following statement :—

"In the parts of Poland cleared from German occupation there exists neither freedom of speech nor of assembly. The Press, the radio, and all officially-recognised political and social organisations are only instruments of the 'Committee of National Liberation in Lublin.'

"On the other hand, the civil authorities of the Underground Polish Republic and the Polish Underground Army, which for more than five years carried on the struggle against the German invader, has been dissolved in the area of the activities of the Committee. Civil servants, officers and soldiers are arrested, disarmed and deported, often with their families.

"Under the existing conditions, the Polish nation has no means of expressing its will and manifesting its disapproval of this new act of lawlessness on the part of the 'Lublin Committee' which has now proclaimed itself as a Provisional Polish Government

"The administration of the territories cleared from German occupation is in the hands of a party which never played an important part in Polish political life—namely, the Polish Workers' Party (Polska Partja Robotnicza), acting under various names. This Party was formed by the Comintern as late as the winter of 1941-42, to replace the Polish Communist Party, which the same Comintern dissolved in 1937.

"At the beginning of 1944, this Party created the so-called 'National Home Council' composed of thirty members, the names of which were never published. In July of the same year this anonymous body appropriated to itself the powers of a Parliament and appointed an executive organ called the 'Polish Committee of National Liberation.' The names of the men who compose this Committee were unknown to the majority of Poles.

"The administration of Polish territories by the Committee came into being only as a result of the military situation By taking advantage of this, and by cancelling all democratic liberties, the Lublin Committee are introducing a system of police administration, together with legal standards and educational principles totally alien to the traditions of Poland and of Western Europe . .

"All the leaders and prominent politicians who have remained in the country, continue to direct the struggle against the Germans, as the Home Cabinet of Ministers and the Council of National Unity composed of the representatives of all principal Polish political parties. They did not abandon their posts after the superhuman effort of the people of Warsaw, whose struggle lasted over two months. They continue to fulfil their duties in closest contact with the Polish Government

"The Polish Government protest emphatically against this attempt against the sovereign rights of the Polish nation made by the Lublin Committee, who have illegally assumed the title of Provisional Government. The Polish nation will never recognise any authority or any totalitarian forms imposed on Polish national territory, and will not cease to stand for the genuine independence of Poland."

" Sois mon frére, ou je te tue," Chamfort once cynically suggested as the slogan for the Jacobins. But the Jacobins were children in comparison with the Bolsheviks and when the latter came into power they swore to avoid the errors of the French Revolution, which had brought it to a halt in the sea of bourgeois mud. ' Mildness,' in the opinion of the Kremlin, was the first of these errors (see Vol. 1, p. 45), and so they undertook to ' purge ' their own country and to ' clean-up ' any newly conquered one with a lightning speed and severity. The ancient methods of Russian Imperialism fitted them extraordinarily well for this task In 1944, in Poland their work was, as in 1939-41, again carried out under the slogans of ' 'Slav brotherhood ' which merely embraced every possible means in the process of extermination.

Behind the ' Curzon Line ' in Eastern Poland, the action was effected by mass conscription and deportation, which, in its final phases, was called the ' transfer of population ' The Poles were to be sent westward to central Poland, and the Lithuanians, Ukrainians and White Ruthenians, who could be found in central Poland, eastward. According to the Soviet statements, it was to be an entirely voluntary affair. The option to be transferred was given up to 1st December, 1944. The number of people who came under the transfer scheme might be appraised at over four million people—but, after the deportations effected by the Russians between 1939-41 and continued afterwards by the Germans, any real estimate was out of the question.

The transfer was nothing less than a repetition of Hitler's action, started in Poland after it had been incorporated into the Reich in 1939, when the Poles were replaced by the Germans coming from the U S.S.R., and the Baltic States and Bessarabia then occupied by the Russians. It was a pendant to the racial policy of Hitler which had its climax in the destruction of the Jewish race in order to make German-occupied Europe ' Judenrein,' but here, instead of Jews, Stalin was expelling the Poles. By 15th April, 1945, Eastern Poland was to be " Polenfrei."

The circumstances for mass transfer of population were not of the best. The Russian Army was in control of the Polish railways, and, to begin with, there were no trains available for such a gigantic removal. Nevertheless, Russia's procedure of deporting unwanted elements was continued throughout the winter of 1944-45, when thousands were packed into empty trains returning from the front line and sent to an unknown destination in Russia. A number of Poles living near the ' Ribbentrop-Molotov Line ' were simply expelled from their houses and driven westward with an order not to return. The amount of human misery entailed by such action, in a country almost as big as Great Britain, this driving the people from the east to the west and vice versa, cannot be easily visualised. Those who were sent to Russia became fodder for N K.V.D. labour camps, those who were expelled to Central Poland, partially occupied at that time by the Red Army, found themselves in dire straits since there was no food

and lodgings for the normal population, and therefore certainly none for the new-comers. Meanwhile the front-line of the war was still passing along the Vistula. Owing to the pressure of war and reasons of economics the German move to clear Western Poland of the Poles was not completed, and it can only be surmised as to whether or how this action will be accomplished by the Russians in Eastern Poland. . . The 'cleaning up' was performed in Central Poland mainly by conscription, hampered as Zymierski stated, by lack of equipment

The extermination of the Home Army was the first step taken by the 'Lublin Committee' under the patronage of the N.K.V.D. Up to March, 1945, over 40,000 members of this Army had been arrested on that section of the territory of the Polish Republic ruled over by this Committee. They were held in prisoner-of-war camps, many transported to Russia, while a great number of the officers were shot To mark the occasion of the transforming of this 'Committee' into a 'Provisional Government,' the intention of continuing this action of annihilation was proclaimed. Osubka Morawski stated · "Those who are still contemplating reactionary and terrorist actions can expect neither mildness nor mercy . We shall act until all reactionary agents will be liquidated."

General Bór Komorowski headed the list of the "agents." Although imprisoned in Germany, he constituted one of the "irreconcilable members of the Home Army and followers of the London Government," and was a symbol of the enemy which they (the Lublin Committee) fought. On 17th January, Lublin radio broadcast to the population of the Polish territories newly occupied by the Red Army :

"While the Polish (i.e., the Soviet Polish Army) was shedding its blood fighting for Praga (Warsaw suburb), Count Bór-Komorowski, Commander of the so-called Home Army, at the order of the reactionary Chief from abroad, surrendered to the Germans His misplaced rising and subsequent surrender of arms considerably assisted the Germans.

"While the Polish soldier was fighting for Poland's freedom, bandits of national forces in agreement with the Germans and the Home Army murdered the best sons of the Polish people . . . It is necessary to expel these traitors, bandits, malefactors and murderers, stained with the blood of their brothers, these instigators of fratricidal strife—the National Armed Forces and the Home Army.

"The Government will not hesitate to take the most severe steps against the enemies of a restored Poland in order to stamp out German agents and anti-national elements, the Home Army and the National Armed Forces."

The Russian offensive began in January and the Polish Home Army continued to help the Red Army, but after the occupation of almost the whole of Poland by the Soviet armies, and their savage persecution of the Polish Home Forces which they encountered in their march, and when all hope of any change in the Soviets' attitude to these forces had vanished, the Polish Government decided the only course was to disband them. After five years of struggle and enormous casualties, the Polish Home Army, still unbeaten and unbroken by the enemy and recognised as an

Allied Force by the Western Powers and supplied by Britain—now ceased to exist With the liberation of the countries in Western Europe, each resistance movement had appeared on the surface and taken a great share, indeed, in the rule of their country, while its armed forces had become part of the army, but in Poland, which had possessed not voluntary guerilla bands, but a regular standing army, the Underground State was forced even deeper into hiding in order to save the last of its leaders from death, and its Army from total destruction On 31st January, the Commander of the Home Army issued his last terse, sad order to his forces :—

" Soldiers of the Home Army !

" I give you my final command Carry on your further work and activity in the spirit of regaining complete independence for the Polish State and for the defence of the Polish people against the forces of extermination. Endeavour to be leaders of your people, and those who will attain the independence of the Polish State In this each one of you must be his own commander

" In the conviction that you will fulfil this order, that you will always remain faithful only to Poland, and in order to facilitate your further work, I am authorised by the President of the Polish Republic to release you from your oath and to dissolve the ranks of the Home Army.

" In the name of the Polish Republic, I thank you for your devoted work to date. I profoundly believe that our sacred cause will triumph, that we shall meet in a truly free and un-occupied Poland

" Long live a free, independent and happy Poland ! "

Thus terminated the story of the Polish Home Army which had no parallel in world history. This Army, which had been able to fight in the rear of the German front for so many years, was unable to survive under the Soviet ' liberator,' and had to be disbanded in the hour when victory was so near, the victory for which they had striven during those long years and for which they and their nation had contributed so much.

"After the dark autumn of 1939," wrote the Polish soldiers' weekly in London, " when the darkest hours of the Allies approached, the Polish Home Army in company with the Polish Forces created abroad, demonstrated that they were an uncompromising faithful Ally. Quisling governments arose throughout Europe and troops, including Russian, were formed in every country to march side by side in Hitler's great ' crusade ' against the Soviets, but in Poland alone the Germans did not even attempt to form such a force. Only in Poland and Yugoslavia was there raging any underground warfare during those days Every train had to be guarded by the invader, every railway station barricaded. It is sufficient to quote that up till the middle of 1944, the troops of the Polish Home Army destroyed or damaged 7,000 railway engines, over 37,000 freight wagons—to quote these alone is sufficient to illustrate how great was the share of the Home Army in the German defeat on the East, a defeat which proved one of the main factors of their eventual catastrophe.

" But those years of a continued struggle did not finish the exploits of that Army In spite of threats, in spite of the dangerous attitude of Soviet Russia, in spite of the Russian force used against them, the soldiers of the Home Army resolved to help the Red Army in its advance through Poland. This they did to the same degree as they had co-operated with British, American and Canadian soldiers on all fronts of the war.

" It was a step taken not only to give assistance to an Ally of the Allies, but for the idea of freedom, which above all, and in spite of everything, is still the aim of this war. The fault does not lie with the soldier of the Home Army or with Poland, that the possibility of concord, of a good neighbourly common life, grounded in a common fight has been frustrated "

The Polish Government, in an explanatory statement, emphasised the achievements of the Home Army in Poland and the Polish Forces abroad :

" The Polish armed forces abroad, fought by the side of our Allies on all fronts Narvik, the Vosges, the Maginot Line, Tobruk, Monte Cassino, Ancona, Falaise, Breda, Arnhem, all these places have been linked forever to our name and to our banners by the blood and sweat of Polish soldiers Five and a half years of uninterrupted warfare by the Polish Air Force, the Battle of Britain and hundreds of raids on France, Belgium, Holland, Norway, Germany, as well as other missions, five and a half years of constant fighting by the Polish Navy and the heavy and exacting work of the Merchant Marine—this represents a part of the Polish share in the war effort of the United Nations

" The Home Army and the Polish people at home bore their share in the continuous struggle against the enemy, shirking no suffering or sacrifice Over five million Polish citizens, one-sixth of the total population, have lost their lives. Warsaw has been almost completely destroyed. Hundreds of towns and villages have been laid waste and the cultural achievements of centuries have been destroyed by the invader. Yet the Polish nation did not succumb, it has never ceased to fight, nor did it lose its faith in the ideals of the freedom of nations and the dignity of human beings.

" Since the time it was formed in 1939, the Home Army, which comprised 250,000 men, carried on continual sabotage and other operations against the armed forces, administration, and communications of the enemy.

"As the front line advanced through Polish territory, the Home Army took up an open fight against the Germans . . . Battles for Wilno, Volyn, Vistula in the Sandomierz and Radom area . . . The final battle of the Home Army, the Warsaw rising, which lasted for sixty-three days, tied up a large part of the German forces and paralysed the communication lines of the German 2nd Army with its supply bases . . . The Home Army participated in the battles of Cracow, Czestochowa and Piotrkow. Each month hundreds of encounters with the foe were made by the Home Army. This great effort of the Home Army was rendered possible only through the whole-hearted and self-sacrificing support of all classes of the Polish community

" Finally, the Home Army carried out valuable intelligence work for the Allies behind the entire Eastern Front and in Germany itself This continuous effort was crowned with great results Among other things, it is to the Home Army that the Allies are indebted for their timely information about flying bombs.

" The work of the Home Army was rendered extremely difficult when, after taking advantage of its aid, the advancing Soviet Armies proceeded to disarm Polish units, to imprison or deport the soldiers and, in some cases, even to shoot Polish officers

" The ashes of Polish towns and villages and the countless battle-fields on which rest the millions of men, women and children who have fallen for their country, testify that there was in Poland not the faintest shadow of treason, hesitation or doubt regarding the great principles with which the whole civilised world is fighting barbarism. Thanks to the heroic effort and the sacrifices of the Home Army and to its brave and proud conduct in

distress and battle, Poland proudly faces the world to-day demanding justice and respect for her rights and as much loyalty and honesty in the fulfilment of obligations towards her as she showed and still shows when called upon to carry out her duties for the common cause."

Except for those few who wrote to the effect that these Allied soldiers should be saved from destruction and that something should be done to rescue them, the English Press made no mention of the disbanding of the Polish Home Army

At the mast of Churchill's ship the signal—" Victory and friendship of Russia at all cost "—had been hoisted, and, since the Soviet Army storming the Reich from the East had no need for Poland, Churchill's England acquiesced to this annihilation of the Army of its oldest Ally. Eden, questioned in the Commons, replied casually, " The Home Army has been formally dissolved by the Polish Government in London "

In January, it became known that Stalin had agreed to a meeting of the Big Three, the Polish Government, in anticipation of that event, had drafted a Memorandum, and on 19th January, the Polish Prime Minister declared once more in a broadcast to Poland that, if the principle of Polish independence was established, every Polish-Soviet problem could be solved easily and amicably He said :

"As a Pole, as one of the leaders of that underground movement which has not for one moment since the beginning of the war ceased in its life-and-death struggle against the German invader, as a Socialist, and as the Prime Minister of the Polish Government, I hold out my hand to the Soviet Union. I hold it out to achieve a lasting agreement, a lasting and honest co-operation.

" From the bottom of my heart I believe that, in spite of all that has been said and all that has been done, such an agreement can be reached. Geography and history demand it. In this appeal, the sincerity of which I hope may at last break through the suspicions which divide our nation from Russia, may I be sincere to the end ? Is the country free while those who organised and carried out the struggle—the legal Government of the Republic, the Ministers inside Poland, the commanders of the Home Army, the Council of National Unity—are not yet free to carry out their duties ? A tragic misunderstanding underlies the fact that the best of the Poles, who have not ceased since Germany first entered Poland to shed their blood in relentless battle against the same enemy whom the Russians fight, are to-day called ' traitors,' are called to trial, condemned, and sentenced. Can it be imagined that in this great moment of her triumph, Russia will brush aside the facts of Polish resistance to the Germans and support a gang of little men who deny their reality, who can offer but false names, false slogans, and false promises in the place of facts which have already written history ?

" We hold out our hand to Russia, and we do not believe that it will be rejected. The whole of our programme and all that we claim is the right of our nation to true independence. Right means that no bayonet, however crowned with glory, shall dictate who is to govern a country. Freedom means not only liberation from the German yoke, it means personal freedom, freedom of speech and thought, freedom of the Press, of association, of religion. It means a Government not imposed by force, but based on democratic elections without any external pressure. If these principles are recognised, and all that they imply fulfilled, then there exists no Russo-Polish problem which cannot be easily and amicably solved."

Arciszewski's offer, his gesture in once again reaching out a hand of reconciliation, had no echo in Moscow. It had no echo anywhere.

The Polish Memorandum handed to London and Washington on 22nd January, suffered the same fate. The Polish Government suggested the appointment of an inter-Allied Commission to take over the temporary administration of Polish territory until free elections could be held. The Poles also urged that an international military commission be present during the elections to ensure order. The Memorandum read as follows :—

" The Polish Government assume that questions concerning Poland will be discussed during the pending meeting of the highest Executives of the Great Allied Powers. With full confidence in the resolve of the Prime Minister of Great Britain to assure to the Allied Polish Republic genuine independence and to guarantee its rights, the Polish Government desire to take advantage of this occasion in order to state their views as follows :

" 1. The Polish Government are of the opinion that territorial questions should be settled after the termination of hostilities. In this matter, the opinion of the Polish Government coincides with the general principles enunciated by the Governments of Great Britain and the United States of America

" The Polish Government are prepared for a friendly settlement of the Polish-Soviet dispute, arising from the claims of the U S.S.R. to the Eastern territories of the Polish Republic, and they will agree to any method provided for by international law for a just and equitable settlement of the dispute, with the participation of both sides.

" Furthermore, the Polish Government are determined to conclude with the U S.S.R. an alliance, guaranteeing the security of both States, and to collaborate closely with the Government of the U S S R within the framework of a universal international security organisation and within that of an economic organisation of the States of Central-Eastern Europe. However, remembering that Poland, as one of the United Nations in the common struggle for the freedom of the world, made immense sacrifices in material and spiritual values, and lost nearly one-fifth of her population killed in battles, massacred in penal camps and ghettos, perished in prisons, in banishment and in forced-labour camps—the Polish Government cannot be expected to recognise decision unilaterally arrived at.

" The Polish Government are convinced that the simultaneous establishment and guarantee of the entire territorial status of the Polish Republic, the settlement of the dispute with the U.S.S R , the allocation to Poland of the territories situated North and West of her frontiers, embracing lands to which she is justly entitled, the assurance of her genuine independence and of full rights to organise her internal life in conformity with the will of the Polish Nation, untrammelled by any foreign intervention—are matters of vital importance, not only to Poland, but also affecting the whole of Europe.

" 2. If, in spite of the constant endeavours of the Polish Government, the Soviet Government should not agree to an understanding, freely arrived at, the Polish Government, desirous of assuring to the country internal peace and liberty, suggest that a Military Inter-Allied Commission be set up, under the control of which the local Polish administration would discharge its functions until the resumption of authority by the legitimate Government. The Commission would have at their disposal military contingents supplied by the Powers represented on it The status of the Commission and the principles on which the local administration would be based, should be

elaborated in agreement with the Polish Government The Polish Government desire to state here that the lawful Polish authorities, which were abolished by the German occupying power in violation of the stipulations of the IV Hague Convention of 1907, continued to function underground, and should form the basis of the administration of the country

"After the return to Poland of the supreme State authorities and of those of her nationals who—owing to military events—remain outside of the frontiers of the country, elections will be held on the basis of a universal, free, direct, secret and proportional ballot, which offers to all political parties full freedom of electoral activities and to all citizens the equal and free right to express their will The Polish Government will retain their authority until the convocation of the Seym, elected in accordance with the aforesaid principles, and the formation in Poland of a new, legitimate Government.

" 3. The Polish Government are confident that the Government of Great Britain will not agree to be a party to decisions concerning the Allied Polish Republic, arrived at without the participation and consent of the Polish Government.

" The Polish Government confidently trust that, at the Conference of the Great Allied Powers, the British Government will give expression to their resolve not to recognise accomplished facts in Poland, in particular not to recognise a puppet government. The recognition of such a ' government ' in Poland would be tantamount to the recognition of the abolition of the independence of Poland, in the defence of which the present war was begun."

By January and February, 1945, the Red Army had expelled the Germans from almost the whole of Polish territory. The Russian Army had come from a country where famine was rife and not only were they unable to supply the population of the newly-conquered areas, but they sought to extract some supplies from them. With this change of occupant, came a new order, a change-over which did not lessen but increased the number of people who were deprived of their means of existence The first item in the Soviet programme for Poland was the annihilation of the so-called ' upper classes,' to be achieved by the destruction of the money market (the abolition of mortgages, shares and the closing of banks, etc), and the confiscation of property, not only that belonging to ' Germans and traitors,' but any land property above a certain minimum figure. The influx of the masses of people escaping from Eastern Provinces increased the general state of destitution and misery.

Under the German rule in Poland, there had been primitive terror and stupid brutality ; the Poles had resisted throughout the occupation, and the Germans had shot them as individuals and massacred them on a wholesale scale. The methods of the new occupants were more far-reaching in their refined ruthlessness. Their final aim was not the temporary subordination of a country, but the transformation to the Soviet order of life as a prelude to a total absorption into the U.S S.R.

To this purpose, the method was to divide the community by splitting it politically and socially. By working among all classes and extracting those who were the bone, the sinew and the gristle of the population,

the remainder, the flesh of the national organism, was more easily transformed into small units, powerless motes, individuals deprived of the means of existence, an amorphous crowd — inert in itself. Those who did not obey did not eat, and, as in the case of Poland, the country as a whole was in opposition, then the country itself was condemned to death. The small foreign ruling body, headed first by a Gauleiter, Bulganin, and afterwards by Lebediev, the Ambassadors from the U S.S.R. and under the cloak of a few Comintern officials with Polish names, true or false as the case might be, was presented as the government and had no difficulty in subduing the country, flooded with Russian troops, and holding the population in a grip of terror. Any sign of opposition to this Soviet-Poland was followed by savage sadism, while the concentration camps founded by the Germans only changed their guards, but not in the majority of cases, the unfortunate occupants.

Contrary to multinational Russia, the new Soviet-Poland was to be absolutely cleared from any other nationalities, and where these were found, they were sent to Russia. The Polish Jews who had been members of the ' Lublin Committee ' no longer appeared in the Soviets' ' Provisional Polish Government,' although Russian agents of Jewish extraction were abundantly represented in the offices of the N.K.V.D.

The political division of the country, begun by the creation of the puppet government, reached further into the community, and as it was above-mentioned, this ' government ' announced the formation of sponsored political parties. Thus the number of parties existing in Poland was doubled. While the national ones were operating deeper and deeper in the underground, the sponsored parties, advertised by the invaders' propaganda, called for supporters, using the most powerful weapon in a starving country—promising any supporters bonus in food. The sponsored parties applied the same tags which had appeared in the Russian vocabulary, the terms ' traitors of the people,' ' followers of the London Government ' and ' Capitalist agents '—thus they had the means to create a chaos which in the end would be easily dispelled by the Government's party—Communist P.P R. The Lublin radio—the same one which had, until now, acted in Moscow under the name of ' Kosciuszko,' daily and nightly began to repeat speeches hastily made by the Chairmen and Secretaries of these new ' parties,' unknown Soviet agents, who claimed to be expressing the ' will of the people ' and who joyfully hailed the ' New Government ' and the New Order.

The re-organised Press in Lublin's Poland used the familiar political titles of newspapers, but all of them, without exception, were published and directed solely by the Communist Party. None of the papers published by the Underground were able to come into the open.

The entry of Russian troops into any town was accompanied by an order to give up all weapons, ammunition and any printing or duplicating machine—even typewriters—which could be used by an Underground

Press, and which had survived the German occupation. On 26th January, a ban was imposed on wireless sets As in the Soviet Union these could consist of relay sets only, which operated from a central control. Thus the population, who had listened to foreign broadcasts at a great risk under the German occupation, had to continue to act illegally and at the same risk under Russian 'liberation.' Any person caught listening-in to foreign stations was killed on the spot by the police. The Soviets were anxious to separate Poland with the greatest possible expediency from the Western World. Throughout the country, new authorities were created by applying the same methods. Squads of Soviet agents, trained in Russia, arrived in every town, and, helped by local Communist sympathisers, where these could be found, set up authorities, conscripted militia and formed tribunals to bring the 'Fascists' to trial. The highest positions in the Civil Service were also taken by officials of the N.K.V.D. In one instance, General Zavadzki of the Security Troops of the N.K.V.D., was nominated the Governor of Silesia. There appeared to be no interference with the Church at this stage, and even an ostentatious willingness to gain the sympathy of the population by emphasising a great deal of goodwill towards the clergy On the other hand, every move was made in the direction of subordinating the education It seemed that religion was to be tolerated in this generation but not in the next. The schools and universities were opened, but the main subjects were in support of the 'Russo-Polish friendship.' In Lublin itself, the Catholic University was re-opened, it had been converted into a 'National Academy,' but ceased to be a Catholic University, for the faculty of theology, which was its main feature, was disbanded. The new rulers announced the opening of educational institutions to which they gave the titles of universities and polytechnics, many more than there had been in pre-war Poland, and some of them with as many as fifteen faculties. The universities and schools, however, were, as in the Soviet Union, deprived of their automony and freedom, and were subordinated to the governmental authorities. The Polish schools in Eastern Poland were closed, and no Polish paper was allowed to be published. The population was told that they were now in Russia and they must speak Russian in all governmental offices and institutions.*

The agrarian problem was the main instrument played upon to cause unrest and dissatisfaction. The first move of the new Soviet authorities was the destruction of the 'landlords' and the classifying of the peasantry into 'kulaks,' 'middels' and proletariat. The agrarian reform was to be opened by the expulsion of the 'landlords,' who, quoting Moscow radio, "if they owned more than fifty arable hectares, are being deprived of their lands and told like any other landless peasants they must apply for five hectares." The estates were partitioned among the farm hands and neighbouring peasants, simply by pacing out a certain area, which was

* *New York Daily Mirror*, March 24th, 1945.

then marked off by stakes Five hectares of ground in Poland was insufficient to provide food for a family, particularly where it was poor arable land, an average of 20 hectares had been considered as a normal holding. These new tenants were forbidden to build cottages on their holdings, and as they had no capital or suitable implements, were told to work ' collectively '—the first step, as they were well aware, towards collectivisation, a word which had a depressing sound in Poland. The Polish peasants knew the history of the Ukrainian and Russian smallholders, who had received the land promised them by the Soviets When, after a few years, collectivisation was introduced, those who had worked hard enough to make good were denounced as ' kulaks ' and liquidated. Thousands fled across the Polish frontier in despair to beg for food.

By this hastily completed ' Lublin reform ' the larger estates, which had been, as in other countries, the main source of the food supply for the towns and industries, were destroyed. Since the country-side had received orders to supply the Red Army with food and this Army requisitioned everything upon which it could lay its hands, there was little left for the population of the towns. The living conditions were already practically impossible and the people were suffering from severe undernourishment, for now the market available to them had become even smaller. There had been great hopes that U.N.R.R A. would help, but these hopes proved futile when Moscow refused to allow this body to enter Poland. The refusal was typical of the general Soviet mistrust of any foreign organisation on territories under their control. For public consumption, they announced this was due to the possibility that agents of the Intelligence Service might be included among the relief personnel. After the authorities of U.N.R.R.A had struggled over this question for one year, President Lehman (head of U N.R.R A.) found the only solution to this dead-lock was to appoint a Russian citizen to be in charge of the relief delegation to Poland in March, 1945. After the Yalta Conference, when the position of the ' Lublin Committee ' had been settled as far as the Soviets were concerned, Moscow agreed to permit U.N.R.R A. to enter Poland. But a wide chasm existed between this permission and its fulfilment. Moscow again, through the ' Lublin Committee ' this time, demanded that control of the distribution of relief should be placed in their (the Soviets) hands. Such an act would be contrary to the international status of U.N R.R.A , who anticipated distributing relief in war-stricken countries through the medium of personnel not connected with these countries, and therefore not influenced by any local political organisation. But, as in the Soviets' system of subordination, food becomes the most important weapon with which to master the mob, there was little hope that U.N.R.R.A. or any other relief organisation from abroad would be allowed to enter ' Lublin's Poland.'

The largest factories, co-operatives and estates of public bodies, especially all printing plants, including their stocks of paper and machinery,

were taken over by the Communist Party. Any small private enterprise was also taken if the owner was known to be of the inteligentsia. In Western Poland, any property in the towns was confiscated by the Germans when it had been incorporated into the Reich, and under the new rulers this property was not returned to the owners. As a means of policing, 'Tenants' Committees' were formed in the towns for every block of flats and group of houses.

The machinery of factories, firstly all those re-organised or built during the Germans' stay, were recognised as military booty, dismantled and sent to Russia. The extent of this Soviet exploitation of the country can be judged by the fact that the pipe-line providing the gas for the surrounding districts of Southern Poland was now directed eastward to the Soviet Ukraine. The railways were widened to take Russian rolling stock.

In any factory left functioning, Soviet Committees were appointed. In all branches of economic life there was a move to level the structure of the country to that of the Soviet Union. The situation of the average person under Soviet rule in Poland can be judged from the following letter, brought from Warsaw to England by one of the English prisoners-of-war in April, 1945 :—

"We were in the suburbs of Warsaw when the rising began, and we did not take part in it—our cottage, furniture, all we had, no longer exists My mother-in-law was in Warsaw during the rising and we have been lucky enough to get her out of the concentration camp set up for the 'bandits of Warsaw' at Pruszkow We are alive—that is the main thing, but we can not see any future for ourselves—our one dream is to escape, for it is doubtful whether they will allow father to return here, the red politicians hate Poles of father's kind We are reduced to almost nothing Karol, being an engineer, can perhaps find us the means of eking out an existence, but not to live. I don't see any way of escaping from here. Can you help us at all? I hope this letter will avoid censorship, otherwise I dare not write to you so openly as this Hunger is rife here, and now they are confiscating the little the Germans left—horses, cattle, etc We have no money, ours has lost its value It was with great difficulty that we got them to change 500 zloty per person, and we have only been able to change 1,000 zlotys (it was a family of four) and a kilogram of butter costs 600 zlotys. You can imagine a little of what our life is like. They are also mobilising our people and they have taken all the men and many women The 'Fascists and reactionaries' as they will call all those who had any property or goods have been arrested. We have gone through so many trials, but this seems to be the end for us. We are at the end of our strength and courage—we cannot see any future, but we can only hope and hope gives us the force to work and keep alive . . "

The 'Lublin Committee,' who, on the strength of its activities, was claiming *de facto* to be a Government, encountered difficulties which even a well-established government, based on the confidence of its people, would hardly have been able to overcome unsupported. Moscow, apart from promises, gave no material help when she established the 'Committee' but, on the contrary, demanded that it should produce supplies for the

Red Army. All stocks of food in Government and private stores, including grain from the estates, were therefore placed at the disposal of the occupying force Obviously such exploitation could not have the effect of obtaining the backing of the country for this ' Committee,' particularly in such a country as Poland. The lawful government existed and all eyes were turned towards it, awaiting the real liberation Moscow propaganda poured out accusation after accusation against these ' agents of the London Government ' who were the instigators of ' bitter obstruction ' and the mere fact of the propaganda alone was to reveal the lack of support given by the Polish population to this ' Committee.' " This obstruction," claimed Moscow, " has even taken the form inside Poland of the assassination of democratic and working-class leaders, and the attemtped sabotage of the great social reforms to which the ' Committee ' set its hand."*

In reality there was no active opposition of any kind against the Russian occupant and its representative ' Committee '—the Home Army had been disbanded—but there was the silent passive opposition of the entire population who was unanimous in refusing to recognise the puppet Government of a foreign power. The familiar tactics of the Russians could not be disguised—the staging of trials for those ' traitors who had co-operated with the Germans ' and the capture and imprisonment of the existing Underground personnel as being the ' most important leaders of the opposition '

Thus the first stages of sovietisation were well under way in Poland. The frame-work of ruling was on a par with the typical Russian cruelty, and ruthlessness. The Underground State was being persecuted, the "Army torn from the hands of the bourgeoisie," the first steps towards the victory of the new régime. In the realms of economics, the great industries had been nationalised, others taken under the control by the aid of the newly-created Communist Party. The land reforms resulted in the devastation of every great agricultural concern and the total destruction of the existing system of food distribution. This was the reality of the situation inside Poland at the time of the Crimea Conference The chains of ' liberation ' were indeed heavy. The individual was set at naught and the omnipotent Soviet State, triumphant . . . Russia pushed its *cordon sanitaire* westward, drawing Poland into its ring.

* *Daily Worker*, January 2nd, 1945.

V.—THE BLACK CHARTER

CHAINS OF LIBERATION

No people must be forced under sovereignty under which it does not wish to live No territory must change hands except for the purpose of securing those who inhabit it a fair chance of life and liberty. No indemnities must be insisted on except those that constitute payment for manifest wrongs done. No readjustments of power must be made except such as will tend to secure the future peace of the world and the future welfare and happiness of its people.

(Woodrow Wilson—A message to the Russian Government, June 8, 1917).

The monumental crime of the partition of Poland has already been repaired by the bayonets of the victorious Allies No part of the Treaty of Versailles was more in keeping with the conscience of the civilised world than this great act of justice and vindication . . . The preservation and integrity of Poland must be regarded as a cause commanding the regard of all the world . . .

(Winston S. Churchill, May 4th, 1941).

Eighty per cent of the Polish territory was already occupied by the Russian armies when Tsar Alexander I, arrived at the Vienna Congress in 1814. Anxious to have his ' right ' to the title of Polish King recognised, he had appeared willing to restore to Poland her frontiers of 1772, on the Dniepr and the Duna, i.e., as she had existed before her Partitions. At that juncture the Allies—even Austria and Prussia (not to mention Britain and France) would have infinitely preferred the Polish Commonwealth restored in all its integrity rather than to see it united with Russia under the Tsarist sceptre, with the latter's armies garrisoned so near Berlin and Vienna.

As soon as the Tsar learned, however, that the Allies regarded his ambition to be acknowledged as King of Poland merely as a question of diplomatic courtesy, he changed his intentions regarding the future of that country. When England's representative, Lord Castlereagh urged him to recognise the freedom of Poland he had brusquely replied. " *C'est moi avec* 600,000 *hommes, on ne negocié pas beaucoup* ". The Army which the Tsar held in Poland, and the evergreen impression of the great services which Russia had rendered in fighting Napoleon, and above all else the fear of a new war, combined to make the Allies accept the arrangement forwarded by the Tsar, and Poland was left reduced to less than

one-seventh of her territory with her frontier on the Bug, as a ' Congress Poland ' under the guarantee of the Allies and under the rule of the Russian imperator

In the palace of the Tsar's at the Crimea, Stalin, whose Red Army was at that time occupying over eighty per cent. of Poland's territories, found it easy to forget the edicts of his master Lenin, who had condemned the partition of Poland and the bargaining over her land. " Once upon a time " he had written " Alexander I, traded people with Napoleon, once upon a time the Tsars traded parts of Poland. Are we to continue these tactics of the Tsars ? To do so would be a repudiation of the tactics of internationalism, it would be chauvinism of the worst brand. . . . We say that frontiers are determined by the will of the population. . . ."

But there was no mention of " the will of the Polish people " at the Crimea On the contrary, " chauvinism of the worst brand " flourished at this Conference—parts of the Polish Republic were traded and her frontiers determined. Stalin might have been repeating every word of Alexander I, including even the reference to " les hommes ", the number of which was in this instance perhaps twenty times more For months, indeed for years, Soviet propaganda had daily and nightly been using the self-same arguments employed by the Tsar in 1815,—the ' enormous Russian service to the Allies' cause ' It seems, however, that Russia's autocrat of 1945, possessed an even better instrument with which to bend and break the will of his partners in the Great Alliance.

One of the Yalta hosts was Molotov, that same Commissar for Foreign Affairs who in Berlin, prior to Hitler's invasion of the West, had asked him whether he was prepared to satisfy Russia's ambitions and stand by while she hoisted the red flag with its hammer and sickle on the shores of Northern Norway at Narvik, and hung ' Prince Oleg's shield ' as the well-known Russian poem says ' on the gateway of Constantinople.' But since the German Army was then standing on the ' Ribbentrop-Molotov Line' in Poland, Hitler bluntly refused this demand which would have given the Soviet Union an outlet to the Mediterranean and an access to the ocean

Following the successful invasion of Europe in the summer of 1944, Eisenhower pierced the defences of the Atlantic Wall and in a lightning offensive crossed France and Belgium. It seemed as if his armies would shortly cut the Siegfried Line and race deep into Germany, perhaps even into Berlin itself. In view of the Allied success on the West, Stalin had called his victorious Red Army to a halt on the Vistula and before East Prussia. It was to his advantage to conserve his forces while his Western Allies continued to fight the stubborn enemy. Stalin was in no hurry to fulfil his share of the Teheran commitments, nor at this junction see the war finish by launching a concentrated attack on Germany proper along the shortest lines to Berlin. It did not meet with his intentions to encounter

Churchill and Roosevelt in the German capital occupied by the Allied troops, and watch their triumphant march on the squares where Hitler's brown shirts had once goose-stepped. An encounter between the Big Three in Berlin at this stage meant that item number one on the programme would be — Germany, and, at the best, he would have had to bargain on equal terms with the leaders of the Atlantic Democracies over the question of the rest of Europe and parts of Asia. Once in Germany, the Allied troops were not much further away to Austria, Hungary, Yugoslavia than was his Red Army, and, taking into consideration their powerful air armada, perhaps even nearer to Bulgaria, Greece and Turkey . . . The defeat of Germany in the main theatre of war was bound to be succeeded by the sudden and imminent crash on all her war fronts. Obviously to hasten the conclusion of hostilities, the Red Army should have attacked farther westward—the stage was set, the roads were dry, the rivers at their autumn low level while before Berlin the bulk of the German armies waited. . . .

At that precise moment, contrary to Britain and the United States, Germany represented political aim number two, for the Russian Dictator The fate of Nazism had already been sealed, the Luftwaffe had fallen to pieces, the navy had been destroyed, only the army was still capable of showing fight; and so, leaving the Germans to the Allies, Stalin pushed forward with all the strength he could muster (using his reserves and withdrawing troops from the Vistula front) in the direction of Rumania, Hungary, Yugoslavia, Austria and Bulgaria. The ' Committees ' of Free Hungarians, Free Austrians etc, tagged along behind the Red Army.

From the first the British idea of developing the ' second front ' in the Balkans had been stubbornly thwarted by Moscow. They (the Soviets), demanded an attack on the main battlefield, an Allied attack directed towards the heart of Germany. The history of these negotiations, the sequence of threats and promises, which ultimately resulted in forcing Britain to renounce any idea of an action in the Balkans and to plan instead a frontal attack on Germany across the Channel, under the most hazardous and unfavourable conditions, is as yet still shrouded in mist, but the outcome has since been clearly recorded and, successful though it was . . . has proved painful to both British interests and British pride.

In the summer of 1944, the Red Army, instead of co-operating in an all-out attack on Berlin began the conquest of those vast territories between the Carpathian Mountains and the Mediterranean, defended only by the second-rate forces of Hitler's satellites. Late that August, Rumania capitulated and on September 13, signed an armistice. On his own decision and without consulting the Allies, Stalin transferred Transylvania from that country to Hungary. England made no protest and Washington limited its observation to the effect that the change must be settled in the frame of the Peace Conference. The American and British companies

controlling the Rumanian oil-plants, although turned out by the Germans were not allowed to take over their property, while all the plant machinery was removed to Russia without delay Within a few months a Communist Government had been installed in Rumania.

In the case of Bulgaria, envoys were actually on their way to Cairo seeking peace terms from the Democracies since they, Britain and United States, not Russia,were at war with her,when Moscow suddenly challenged Bulgaria, and proclaimed a state of war with that country. Two hours before its publication London and Washington received Moscow's Note informing them of this fact, and the Red Army entered that territory. Several American and British Officers and officials who had already arrived in Sofia as the result of the latter's previous negotiations with the Allies, were expelled unceremoniously by the Russians. On October 28, Russia dictated armistice terms which had the effect of placing Bulgaria entirely within her power. A ' purge ' was immediately executed and the top layer of Bulgaria's ruling class was wiped out.

At Teheran, Churchill and Stalin had agreed on a joint policy with regard to Yugoslavia, but the Soviet's Marshal Tito, whom the British had supported in preference to General Mikhajlovich [and supplied abundantly with war material, now contemptuously ignored the English. It must have been obvious to Churchill that no words could stem this Russian flood towards the edge of the Mediterranean area, for Tito was already talking of Trieste, of a Balkan Federation, allied with the Soviet Union. Churchill went to Quebec seeking the advice and help of Roosevelt regarding the situation which had arisen and then continued his journey to Moscow. Poland was the corner of the world over which he was willing to make concessions, and he called on Mikolajczyk to follow him to Russia as an offering with which to appease the Kremlin war-lord. In the meantime, Tito ' invited ' the Soviets to visit his country and the Red Army troops marched into Yugoslavia Amid great publicity in the British press, a small British force landed on the Adriatic coast at Dalmatia, so small indeed that it was merely symbolical . . . then suddenly, nothing more was heard The American press, however, was able to inform its readers that the British who had landed in Dalmatia with the intention of aiding the people of Yugoslavia in their struggle against the invader, had been encircled by Tito's troops . . . and disarmed. Faced with first fighting their hosts, and afterwards helping them in the common fight against the common foe, the British gave in and after some argument with Tito's representatives, were allowed to re-embark and leave those ' friendly ' shores.

Already in October, Moscow had demanded oil concessions in the northern part of Persia from the Persian Government, i.e., from those areas under the Soviet occupation since 1942. When the Persian Government, supported by the British—refused, it was ousted by Moscow and replaced with one more amenable. The Americans, who tried amicably

to intervene in this affair, were strongly censured by the Soviets and asked on what grounds were they interfering within the Russian sphere of security?

A defeated Hungary had signed an armistice on January 21, 1945, and a puppet Government was already installed. Finland, in a forgotten corner of the world was abandoned to the Soviets without any attempt at intervention on the part of the other two Great Allies. In Greece, left within the British sphere a "well-organised Communist plot" as Churchill defined it, had tried to snatch the power. The British intervened in strength in this instance, and overcame the small minority who wanted to place their country under Soviet rule It was only by this display of force that Britain was able to prevent the sole remaining country on the Balkan peninsula from suffering the same fate as the others.

As yet, Czecho-Slovakia was still awaiting her turn to be 'liberated' by the Soviet Forces. The Provisional Government under Dr. Benes, had already professed its willingness to become a vassal of the Kremlin, and, pledged to follow it through fire and water, was preparing to remodel itself after the Soviet pattern.

In the beginning of 1945, the acquisition of the Slav and non-Slav soil between the Baltic and the Adriatic, the Middle Zone, the Great Pan-Slavia, "over which", as Stalin claimed "the U.S.S.R. will keep guard" became a reality. A hundred divisions, mainly belonging to Hitler's satellites or foreign conscripts had by now joined the ranks of the Red Army. Those in the road of the advancing Russian tide who refused to be assimilated, and who firmly continued to stand by their independence —the Polish Home Army, had been destroyed . . . And as this story was drawing to a close, when Moscow already began to extract from those newly-occupied lands what little the Germans had left, then and then only did the Kremlin's war-lord evince his readiness to meet his partners and dictate new terms for further co-operation. In the changed situation the negotiations at Teheran had already lost their value and the 'Unity of the Allies' which the Russians had pounded to dust, now had to be reconstructed.

It is necessary to bear in mind that the British Premier had been the one to evince the greatest eagerness in the past six months to meet his partners in the Alliance, or rather to meet that partner who, taking advantage of his own and Allied victories, was engaged in making history by entering the Balkans But as it was stated the Kremlin's war-lord was in no hurry to see any of the leaders of the Atlantic Democracies during that time. Stalin preferred to "stand at the bar and wait", although to quote the British Prime Minister "strong and authoratative decisions were required." Deploring the impossibility of arranging any meeting of the Big Three, Churchill in sheer desperation publicly declared his willingness to "proceed to any place at any time, under any conditions."

The British Press who, after the Premier's last trip to Moscow, or rather after this seeking-out of the Russian war-lord (just as Chamberlain had sought Hitler at the time of Munich), had indignantly written that these journeys must cease as being 'damaging to British prestige,' now had nothing to say

At Teheran Stalin had already shown the brilliancy of his technique in dealing with his 'friends' in the Alliance, the representatives of the Capitalist world. It could be assumed now, that a second meeting would be agreed on only when the Russian Dictator considered the moment was ripe to strike a knock-out blow.

Stalin was to decide on the time and place. In 1943, he had conceded to the point of going to meet the leaders of the Democracies at Teheran, (still guarded by the troops of the N.K.V.D.), now, he unceremoniously appointed Russian territory as a meeting place—the Crimea, and the Tsarist palace at Yalta The implications seemed all too obvious

Roosevelt, nearly at the end of his career (he was to die a few weeks later), and despite his physical handicap, undertook the long journey to Russia. Like Churchill he was anxious to face Stalin. It seemed a feeling of great uneasiness urged him to meet the Dictator once more,—to remind him of those mutual covenants made together at Teheran " to cleanse the world of ancient evils, ancient ills." Victory was approaching with gigantic paces, but it did not appear to be a victory which would reward the " champions of tolerance and decency and freedom and faith " as he had anticipated. For in spite of the approaching end of hostilities the world of tyranny, cruelty and serfdom was not growing smaller.... Roosevelt was to witness his plan for a world settlement which should have crowned this victory, being stamped into the ground beneath the boots of the Red Army in their march across Europe. And he had gambled everything on this throw. He was forced to realise that the faith which had enabled him believe that ultimately the ideological differences between Soviet and Western civilisation, if not disappearing altogether, would at least allow the people under both systems to live and work side by side, had no foundation . . . the events which had taken place in every country occupied by Stalin's armies were proof enough in themselves.

Roosevelt's support of Stalin had tipped the scales against Churchill at Teheran. Now the American leader was to realise the magnitude of the disaster he had unwittingly helped to bring about. He had backed the Russian Dictator wholeheartedly, convinced that, in spite of all evidence to the contrary, Russia could be won over to world co-operation, to work with the democracy, the virtues of which the American leader had preached so eloquently for so many years. He was to find all his hopes falling around his ears as the three-horse spanned Russian troika of Gogola's vision, raced across Europe trampling over the Germans, their satellites

and . . the Allies themselves. Roosevelt travelled to Yalta in the last forlorn hope that there he might be able to find strong enough words, oaths, anathemae by which he could stop this Russian avalanche. He was prepared to grasp at any straw. At that moment Churchill might well have turned to him with a sad smile . . . *Tu l'as voulu, George Dandin. . . Tu l'as voulu* . . And it was too late At Teheran there had still been the alternative of forgiving Hitler and returning to the Europe of Versaille, with Russia and Germany thoroughly exhausted. But now Stalin was able to convince the partners that there was no other choice but to fall in with his plan And Japan was as yet unbeaten . .

A map of Europe, the war fronts clearly indicated, was spread on the wall facing the conference table of the Big Three in the Tsarist palace at Yalta The surface occupied by the Red Army, where no Allied correspondent was allowed to move freely, where the issue of the meagre news was supplied exclusively by Russian controlled radio, at that time entirely or partially covered twelve countries—from Norway and Finland on the north to the borders of Greece on the south, nearly three-quarter million square miles, where over one hundred million people had been living at the outbreak of war The arrows on the map showed the progress of the Red Army in its march towards Berlin, and others indicated the presence of this army on the south of the Balkans and in Northern Norway where across the water lay Britain. . . . It is justifiable therefore to assume that had those same proposals put by Molotov to Hitler five years previously, been forwarded by their host at Yalta, Churchill and Roosevelt would have been more than disconcerted Whatever arguments they might choose to forward against such a request would have carried little weight, since at that particular time the Red Army was advancing swiftly onwards, while the Allies themselves were only scaling the outer defences of the Siegfried Line.

The main topic of the Conference was to be the acceleration of the victory and the design for the re-organisation of Europe and Asia when Japan had fallen, although after the Teheran defeat, contrary to Russia, neither Great Britain nor America had any clear vision as to how they would exploit the victory. Furthermore, Stalin, at that very moment, possessed the means to compel his partners to reckon with his intentions. His assets were—he could, if he so wished, cease fighting against Germany at any time and moreover he was in a position to destroy the existing status of the Mediterranean area The Russo-Bulgarian forces could reach the shores of the Aegean Sea, Dardanelles and Sea of Marmara within a few days, and occupy Macedonia, Thrace . . those same points on the Turkish shores which thirty years before France and Britain had promised to Russia in the secret treaty of 1915. And there was also Bulgaria's endeavour to gain an outlet through Greek territory to the Aegean Sea. Thus, at a move from the Kremlin the dream of Russian

imperialists would be fulfilled and Constantinople . . . 'Tsars' city' . . . as it was termed in Russia, would be 'liberated' after almost five hundred years of 'occupation'. Lenin and the Communist Party had condemned the imperialist designs of "the partition of Turkey", and the dream of "seizing Constantinople," and Lenin had also strongly condemned the "Tsarist Government's plan to seize Galicia, part o Austria and Hungary."* Eastern Galicia, however, had not been 'seized' but already 'liberated' by the Red Army, therefore, the 'liberation' of the Turkish Straits would have presented no great moral difficulty.

A fore-warned Turkey who had hitherto so stubbornly resisted entering the war, now, "on the advice of the British Government" and in order to have the "right to take part in the Peace Conference" declared war on Germany.

The sword of Damocles was suspended over that conference table at Yalta. The opportunity for blackmail which rested in the hands of Stalin was immense. The Big Two possessed far too westernised an outlook to deal with this Georgian professional revolutionary. And did they in truth believe in their arguments, in their ability to outmatch this partner whose every action was dictated by an entirely different set of rules to those of Harrow and Harvard? [If they came with the expectation of partaking in a debate then they were again to be disappointed, for a debate meant an opportunity to strike a bargain, but Stalin met them only on the day when he considered his position strong enough to dictate terms. The Western partners, who should have known what to expect after their experience at Teheran, were again taken by surprise. It was on the cards that they could have disagreed with Comrade Stalin and gone back by the waiting planes, but in such an event they would no doubt, while still on their journey, have listened, not so much to the engine beating out Churchill's unhappy witticism of 1938, "*If at first you don't concede, fly, fly, fly again,*" but to communiques announcing the series of moves which would result in a total disintregation of their work during the past years of bloody struggle. The withdrawal of the Soviet Union from the war at this stage looked most advantageous to Stalin. The change of camp still more so. . . . He could then have secured for himself all those countries of the Middle Zone, including perhaps East Prussia which he was to occupy and those countries which the Red Army would be able to occupy at the expense of the British—Greece, Turkey, Southern Persia, the oil-fields of Irak and India. While the Anglo-American forces were still engaged on the battle-fronts of the Rhineland and Holland, and in the Pacific, the Russian Army, partially released from the German front would have been able within the space of a few weeks or months,

* Quoting the *History of the Communist Party*, English Edition, Moscow, 1942, p. 16, and Lenin's *The Letters from Afar*, Letter No. 4.

to alter the map of that vital part of the Eastern Mediterranean and South-Western Asia beyond possibility of any restoration of the *status quo*, or at any rate, so long as Germany remained unbeaten. That is, if under these circumstances a defeat of Germany could have been achieved. . . .

Furthermore, and what was even more pregnant, a withdrawal from the war would have enabled the ruling circle of the Soviets, that same group of men who twenty-five years before had proclaimed the need for World Revolution, to again watch the joyful spectacle of the capitalist world destroying itself in a battle which might last no one knew for how long . And, moreover, such a move would not limit the Soviets liberty of diplomatic action—they could always participate in the final *coup-de-grace* of Germany and take a share in the carving up, or alternatively, adopt a bolder step so dear to the hearts of the old Bolsheviks, i.e, revolutionise Germany—instal a puppet Government . . . the 'Committee of Free Germans' was waiting and an embryonic German Army could appear within a few weeks.* Moscow already had its own Polish Government in working order and one more such Government mattered little

It was not to be quite so plain sailing for the Soviets. Russia badly needed a breathing space of peace, for she was both exhausted and war-battered. Peace could not be expected so long as the Germans continued fighting. Viewing the situation from another angle, the exploitation of a devastated Eastern and Central Europe, could not equal or replace the continual stream of Allied supplies (which had already passed eleven figures in dollars, and nine figures in pound sterling),

* *New York Times*, July 21st, 1943, "Indicating official Soviet approval of the new committee, *Pravda* published a manifesto by that body calling upon German soldiers to mutiny, turn their backs on their leaders, and blast their way back home. "The new regime would be," said the manifesto, occupying a full page in *Pravda*, "consistent with Premier Stalin's declaration of November, 7th, 1942, in which he said that the Nazi state and army must be destroyed, but that the German people and state are indestructable"

This Moscow-created German Committee had its own journal *Free Germany*, just as the Union of Polish Patriots had *Free Poland*

Observer, April 23rd, 1944:—

On January 29th, the National Committee "Free Germany," in Moscow gave out the slogan . "The shortest way home leads east, not west German soldiers, join us go over to the National Committee Here we shall rally and then go to Germany to create order there."

On April 14th, General von Seydlitz, the vice-president of the National Committee and president of the German Officers' League, sent a letter to General Jaenecke, commander of the 17th German Army in the Crimea, which gives some more details. In this letter he says .

"The lives of a considerable number of young Germans are in your hands You can save them in two ways . either by an honourable capitulation or by joining the National Committee. Make contact with me through the plenipotentiaries of the National Committee I shall then give you further confidential information which is of decisive importance for the future of Germany and which will facilitate your decision"

coming into Russia, supplies which to such a great extent had helped the Soviets to exist and turn the tide of war on their territory.

There was yet one other factor which the Russian dictator had to consider and a most important point to the ruling circle of the Kremlin. Twenty-five years before, the Englishman who now sat with Stalin at the conference table at Yalta, had organised and planned a crusade against the Soviets. He had rallied the peoples of Europe to fight the Bolshevik menace and had the Prussian Junkers in those days been given the opportunity they would, undoubtedly have marched with Lloyd George and Churchill. Twenty years afterwards these Junkers were to begin their march against Russia—under Hitler. Stalin did not discriminate between the two invasions by the warriors of the Capitalist world These two waves of the Capitalist sea, about which he had instructed Comrade Ivanov just before the Second Great War, were the one and same flood as far as he was concerned. Stalin, the man who left his religion behind when he ran away from the Orthodox seminary,—this unfinished clergyman adopted a new religion in the Socialist underground, its creed,—that only facts mattered, that feelings and sentiments were a testimony of weakness and as such, should be extirpated ! Under the influence of this materialistic conception, Stalin was bound to possess the conviction that if he were now to betray the Allies by commencing peace negotiations with Hitler, it would be a signal for them, in order to avoid a new Brest Litovsk, to make an immediate peace with Germany. The Soviets had indeed suspected London of such an attempt to arrive at an understanding with the Fuehrer a year ago, and the official Soviet Press agency openly accused Downing Street.

The British Press in answer commented mildly that the Russians were over-sensitive and suspicious. . . . Nevertheless, the possibility cannot be excluded at this stage that Hitler had already made peace proposals to the Atlantic Democracies and perhaps to the Russians as well.

There was one factor which influenced the possibility of negotiating with Hitler, which as Stalin knew was of the greatest importance, namely, if Hitler found himself obliged to choose between Russia's offer to ' cease fire ' or the Allies, he would without hesitation have chosen the latter's. Although he had deserted and betrayed the Western World of which he had proved such an erring son, nevertheless there was no getting away from the fact that Germany formed part of this World

The Fuehrer's intention to fight to the last square yard of German soil was based on the conviction that sooner or later he would be able to arrive at an understanding, either with the West or the East through the betrayal of one by the other. . . . He did not believe that England would tolerate the enormity of the Kremlin's demands and consequent stabilisation of the Soviets in Central Europe, or that Russia would not repeat the story of Brest Litovsk.

On September 6, 1943, Churchill elaborating upon his proposed basis for a world organisation, declared in his speech at Harvard University

that " nothing will work soundly or for long without the united effort of the British and American peoples. If we are together nothing is impossible. If we are divided all will fail." Roosevelt had forgotten this truism at Teheran, but a year of Soviet conquest, their adoption of the aggressive part of Hitler's programme was sufficient to jolt his memory at the Crimea, and he stood united with Churchill in opposition to Stalin's designs, but now it was to prove immaterial. . . . Stalin was in a much stronger position than he had been fourteen months before at Teheran

After Munich, Gandhi had remarked that " they sold their souls for seven days of earthly existence." At the Crimea they had nothing more to sell . . . they had lost their souls at Teheran Roosevelt at last understood that unless he supported England and if he refused to collaborate with it, then Europe, the whole of Europe , in a matter of months, not years, would be in Stalin's hands and England would find herself fighting on the bridgehead of France The Second Great War would reach its last and final phase.

The problem had been set by Stalin and the responsibility for the next move on the chess-board rested more with Roosevelt than with Churchill. The strong pieces were in Stalin's hands, and the two other partners had to believe at last that he really intended carrying out his threat and racing the foaming war-horses over those countries as yet spared by their hooves. Panic-stricken and check-mated by the Russian autocrat, they signed whatever Molotov put in front of them on that table. They merely bargained over details They argued in an effort to gain a few months or years of ' earthly existence,' until the war with Japan would be finished, but in the meantime they signed the death warrant of part of the Western world, the world of which they were the representatives, and each fraction of which, if undefended by them, would inevitably be annexed by the Soviets in the shortest possible time. They agreed to destroy Germany as a Power—and brought themselves within firing distance of the guns of the Red Army. They appended their recognition to the seizure of the Eastern part of the Middle Zone, the Baltic States, and handed over half Poland, wrapped in the Union Jack and Stars and Stripes to Stalin, admitting recognition of the Ribbentrop-Molotov agreement of 1939 (although the name, ' Curzon Line ' in this instance had been substituted in the text) which had once been so emphatically rejected by His Majesty's Government in a Note handed by Anthony Eden to Sikorski on July 30, 1941.

When Poland had stood between life and death during the Communist invasion of 1920, and Lloyd George had expressed the opinion she could still be saved by a withdrawal to the ' Curzon Line,' it was *The Times* who had written with indignation on August 18, 1920 :—

" Those (terms) which Mr. Lloyd George and Lord Curzon had recom-

mended Poland accept are on the true Russian pattern They are so drawn —like the Tsarist treaties with Turkey—as to afford the Russian rulers a pretext to interfere in the internal affairs of Poland as the champions of a Red Polish Party whenever they think fit . . . "

In 1945, the terms recommended to Poland by the Big Three were similar to those offered by the " champions of the Red Polish Party " in 1920. Churchill was now not only recognising these terms, and the ' Curzon Line ', but was even, it seemed, convinced of the ' justice ' of this line. . . . Chamberlain's ' sweet reasonableness ' by which he had tried to talk Hitler into believing in the good intentions of the British Government was increased a thousand fold in Churchill's attempt to persuade Stalin of his sincerity over the Polish question.

A few weeks later when the successful Allied offensive into the depths of Germany had been carried out and the threat of a separate Russo-German peace had vanished, *The Times* on April 6, explained that at the Crimea ' there was no violation of the Anglo-Polish Treaty, that only the advice which the Big Three would tender to the Polish Government had been decided on.'

" The decision with respect to the boundaries of Poland was a compromise," Roosevelt afterwards explained and he " did not agree with all of it by any means." It was indeed a ' compromise ' as far as Stalin was concerned, for instead of inserting three-quarters of Poland into the adjacent Soviet Republics he agreed to be satisfied with half of this country. But even this ' compromise ' could not change the reality. Under the facade of empty words the remainder of the country was to be transformed into a Soviet Republic. It is true to say the actual term ' Soviet ' had still not been used but the conscripts to the ' Polish ' forces in Russian-occupied Poland were obliged to swear their fidelity and their allegiance to Stalin as the ' Fuehrer of the Slav nations ', while the name of the Almighty was omitted from their oath, just as it was omitted in the oath taken by the Cabinet Ministers of this ' Lublin Soviet Republic ' over whose frontiers Roosevelt and Churchill were ' compromising ' at the Crimea.

The Yalta Declaration like the one at Teheran, was drafted by the Soviet pen, and its comments on the Atlantic Charter almost seemed an insult to that document. There was no evidence in the communique of the ' hard-bargaining ' about which the Press had been informed, nor was there trace of any Soviet concession. Eden was to argue later in the Commons that the word ' new ' in relation to the ' Polish Government ', had been inserted at his request; but as far as the Kremlin was concerned, this ' new ' referred to their own ' new ' agents who were waiting to replace those who formed the ' Lublin Committee.' Frightened by the spectre of the Red Army troops reaching the shores of the Dardanelles, occupying Poland and the other countries of the Middle

Zone without the agreement of the Allies, or alternatively, entering those countries except Turkey and Greece, with their consent, the two leaders of the Atlantic Democracies gave ground. This was Stalin's price in the last rounds of the Second Great War. Caught in a trap built with their own hands, unconvinced by the few ambiguous promises in respect of Japan, but with the one thought that Germany must be destroyed, Churchill and Roosevelt, together with their Foreign Secretaries were now mainly concerned with camouflaging Stalin's demands, with lofty phrases. Public opinion in their countries must be appeased and their propaganda apparatus had to make this defeat digestible.

The Big Two passed in silence over Russia's territorial annexations in 1939—1940, over the rape of the Baltic States, only the annexation of Poland was *expressis verbis* recorded in the Declaration. The chapters concerning Poland read :—

"We came to the Crimea Conference resolved to set le our differences about Poland. We discussed fully all aspects of the question We reaffirmed our common desire to see established a strong, free, independent, and democratic Poland As a result of our discussion we have agreed on the conditions in which a new Polish Provisional Government of National Unity may be formed in such a manner as to command recognition by the three major Powers The agreement reached is as follows .

A new situation has been created in Poland as a result of her complete liberation by the Red Army

This calls for the establishment of a Polish Provisional Government which can be more broadly based than was possible before the recent liberation of western Poland. The Provisional Government which is now functioning in Poland should, therefore, be reorganised on a broader democratic basis with the inclusion of democratic leaders from Poland itself and from Poles abroad. This new Government should then be called the Polish Provisional Government of National Unity

M. Molotov, Mr. Harriman, and Sir Archibald Clark Kerr are authorised as a Commission to consult in the first instance in Moscow with members of the present Provisional Government and with other Polish democratic leaders from within Poland and from abroad, with a view to the reorganisation of the present Government along the above lines.

This Polish Provisional Government of National Unity shall be pledged to the holding of free and unfettered elections as soon as possible on the basis of universal suffrage and the secret ballot. In these elections all democratic and anti-Nazis parties shall have the right to take part and to put forward candidates

When a Polish Provisional Government of National Unity has been properly formed in conformity with the above, the Government of the U.S.S.R., which now maintains diplomatic relations with the present Provisional Government of Poland, and the Government of the United Kingdom and the Government of the United States will establish diplomatic relations with the new Polish Provisional Government of National Unity, and will exchange Ambassadors by whose reports the respective Governments will be kept informed about the situation of Poland.

The three heads of Government consider that the eastern frontier of Poland should follow the Curzon Line, with digressions from it in

some regions of five to eight kilometres in favour of Poland. They recognise that Poland must receive substantial accessions of territory in the north and west. They feel that the opinion of the new Polish Provisional Government of National Unity should be sought in due course on the extent of these accessions, and that the final delimitations of the western frontier of Poland should thereafter await the Peace Conference."

Before leaving for the Crimea, Churchill and Roosevelt held high hopes of arresting the march of Russian imperialism. Their statements, given under pressure of public opinion, left no doubts on this point. They had not recognised the transformation of the ' Lublin Committee ' into the ' Provisional Government ' and still supported ' their ' Polish Government in London. American Congress argued that America was not fighting to substitute one totalitarianism in Europe for another. Roosevelt, challenged by Churchill's speech of December 15, in turn expressed his view on the state of affairs in Europe in his New Year message to Congress. His high-sounding slogans were in complete opposition to Stalin's already accomplished moves and self-motivated actions. Roosevelt wrote :—

" I should not be frank if I did not admit anxieties about many situations—the Greek and Polish, for example. But those situations are not as easy or as simple to deal with as some spokesmen, whose sincerity I do not question, would have us believe We have obligations, not necessarily legal, to the exiled Governments, to the underground leaders and to our major Allies who came much nearer the shadows than we did.

" We and our Allies have declared that it is our purpose to respect the right of all peoples to choose the form of government under which they will live and to see sovereign rights and self-government restored to those who have been forcibly deprived of them But with internal dissension, with many citizens of liberated countries still prisoners-of-war or forced to labour in Germany, it is difficult to guess the kind of self-government the people really want

" During the interim period, until conditions permit a genuine expression of the people s will, we and our Allies have a duty, which we cannot ignore to use our influence to the end that no temporary or provisional authorities in the liberated countries block the eventual exercise of the people's right freely to choose the government and institutions under which, as free men they are to live. '

Furthermore in his message, Roosevelt added ·—

" It is a good and a useful thing—it is an essential thing—to have principles toward which we campaign. And we shall not hesitate to use our influence—and to use it now—to secure so far as is humanly possible the fulfilment of the principles of the Atlantic Charter, we have not shrunk from the military responsibilities brought on by this war We cannot, and will not, shrink from the political responsibilities which follow in the wake of battle "

Two weeks after penning these noble phrases Roosevelt together with Churchill placed his name to a document absolutely contrary to every principle they had proclaimed heretofore. The arguments which

served to persuade them must indeed have been convincing in the extreme and for the first time in their political career they omitted their conventional smile under the battery of photographers. They were beaten hands down. . . .

They affixed their signatures to a document which recognised Russia's right to deal with the first warrior in the Allied camp, who, as they both claimed, had fought so valiantly for democracy and against aggression, —to deal with their ally Poland,—as an enemy and a bitter enemy at that. None of Hitler's defeated satellites were subjected to a similar contemptuous and humiliating usage by the Big Three Even Germany, in spite of ' unconditional surrender ', was promised better treatment. At the very most the Allies were threatening to take 15—20 per cent of her State territory, and furthermore, it was territory which had always been the subject of dispute with her neighbours, while in the case of Poland, the Big Three were agreeing that this country should lose half her territory to Russia, land which had always been undisputedly Polish. Germany could expect occupation—Poland annexation. It seemed to the Poles that it was better to be a German, surrendering unconditionally to the Anglo-Americans, who would at least treat him according to some standards of Christian culture, than to be a Pole who would find himself under ' friendly ' Russian protection and, in this ' close alliance ', could expect a similar treatment as had been accorded his compatriots in Eastern Poland in 1939—1941.

The leaders of the three Greatest Powers of the world were settling the future status of Poland, the Ally of the two of them, endeavouring to compose her Government and decide her frontiers without asking or even mentioning the proceedings to her legal Government, who had conducted the struggle against the common enemy both in the country itself and outside for over five years. Even in the Munich Agreement the signatories had not gone so far as to annihilate its government when they presided over the partitioning of Czecho-Slovakia. As matters stood, the state organisation of Poland might indeed never have existed as far as the Big Three were concerned.

" It was not as an undefined national group that Poland entered the war," wrote *The Tablet*, " but as a sovereign State, placing at our disposal not mercenaries which we might have hired, but the armed forces of a sovereign State, under the terms of an alliance concluded two days after the Russo-German non-aggression Pact. Yet the language of the Crimea Declaration entirely disregards the existence of the Polish State, with its legal continuity, Government, territory, citizens and armed forces, envisaging instead a loose national group upon which the attributes of a State, territory and a government are to be bestowed by the benevolent Powers There could be no clearer demonstration of the changed approach to world order."

This unwarranted attempt to enforce an alien government on the country of an Ally, was in direct contradiction to all the edicts of the Atlantic Charter, and to those principles for which the United States,

Britain and that whole array of those millions who joined the Great Alliance were campaigning. The rights of a nation to have a government which was the embodiment of its will, had been trampled under-foot. " Don Quixote remarked to Sancho Panza " wrote Alastair Forbes in *Daily Mail* " that even among brigands the virtues of justice were found indispensable, but that was before the days of the Big Three . . ." The Big Three were admitting the necessity of having in Poland, one of the most democratic countries of the world, a government which would accept their dictation, and thereby formally, at any rate, release those concerned from their commitments. To this end the rights of the Polish people to create their own government had been usurped by three men—a Russian, a Briton and an American For this purpose they established a commission in the Russian capital headed by the Russian Foreign Commissar, the man who had already once signed the partition of Poland with the Soviets' ex-partner Germany

In the eighteenth century the last of the Polish Kings, Stanislas August, had been forced on Poland by a similar commission, composed of Catherine the Second, and her lieutenants—he died an exile in the Tsarist capital .

When in 1943, the Moscow ' Union of Patriots ', had tried to usurp the sovereign rights of the Polish Government, it was clear that only the Soviets could be held responsible for these moves, but in this latest development the responsibility was also shown to rest with the two other Powers. Hitler, who after conquering any country placed its rulers in chains and appointed a Quisling government, or as in Poland, just a gauleiter, appeared a mere simpleton in comparison with the inventor of this masterpiece of power politics at the Crimea, where in all solemnity it was decided to form a government for the weaker Ally. It was a triumph of the thesis of the Soviets, which laid down that any government who could not defend its rights with weapons, should be overpowered

The Crimea Conference put the final screw in the coffin of the Atlantic Charter, the source of hope and inspiration to the peoples of the world. Thirty nations believing in the commitments given to mankind in this Charter had supported the Great Alliance. From the Declaration at Yalta, they now learned that the Atlantic Charter bore no relation to the reality of the present—it was merely a ' guide ', as the British Premier explained in the House ; they now learned that the leaders of the Atlantic Democracies were handing to Russia the right to intervene in the internal affairs of weaker countries, and that in full accord with Russia's wish they were ' considering ' what line the Eastern frontier of Poland was to follow.

Thus three non-European Powers were agreeing on the division and future of Europe without consulting the people concerned, forcing them

under the sovereignty beneath which they had no wish to live, making null and void the phrases in the Declaration whereby they had solemnly emphasised their willingness to " enable the liberated people to destroy the last vestiges of Nazism and Fascism and to create democratic institutions of their own choice."

But since the term ' democracy ' held different meanings for these leaders of the ' opposite polar circles ', each could interpret them according to his own scheme of things. The essence of democracy lies in a government of its people, chosen by its people, and not by ministers and ambassadors of foreign Powers. The real importance behind this meeting, lay in the recognition, by the representatives of the Three Powers, and in the stabilisation of that political order in Europe which, brought into being by the German expansion had been taken over after her defeat and continued under the guise of Russian ' liberation '—a set-up incompatible with democracy in the sense of that term as understood by Pericles and Plato. This new Europe which the Big Three were shaping in the Tsarist Palace at Yalta, and the form of Democracy agreed upon in that edifice, impregnated with centuries of despotism, meant the deprivation of the rights of those nations in the Middle Zone to elect their own governments, recognition of the Soviets' Marshal as the ruler of Yugoslavia and the silent acceptance of the series of puppet governmental organs sponsored by the Soviets in the other States. The selling of Poland accomplished at Teheran was now openly confirmed. The ghosts of the murdered Tsars haunting this place at the Crimea, (none of them had died peacefully in his bed) must have forgiven this usurper to their blood-soaked throne when they saw how efficiently he had taken over their imperialist plans to dominate the world.

The leaders of the Atlantic Democracies had left their respective countries for the Yalta Conference recognising the Polish Government—once having arrived in the Soviet Union it might never have existed. Could this be considered otherwise than as a political and moral defeat of the greatest magnitude ?

In 1939 Britain was ill-prepared for war, but rather than allow Hitler to satisfy his territorial ambitions, or, as it might very easily have been—Russian territorial demands, she had chosen war. In those days the voice of Britain, that Britain towards whom the eyes of the free peoples of the world had turned with proud admiration had rung with a different tune. On December 15, 1939, Halifax had spoken for Britain :—

" We have tried to improve our relations with Russia, but in doing so we had always maintained the position that, rights of third parties must remain intact and be unaffected by our negotiations.

" I have little doubt that the people of this country would prefer to face difficulties and embarrassment rather than feel that we had compromised the honour of this country and the Commonwealth."

By 1945, Britain as it was said, had become so war weary (although she could not compare her fate with those countries where the four Horsemen of the Apocalypse had ranged so fiercely for so many weary years), that her Government could no longer stand up to " face difficulties and embarrassment " and therefore her leaders slipped into the facile language manufactured by the Soviet theorists which so easily helped in the denial of the rights of peoples, treaties, alliances and even of their own thesis and commitments It would be difficult to find a period in history so fraught with insincerity, where such a vast chasm lay between the spoken word and the deed Thus, cloaked by meaningless phraseology, the spheres of influence drawn up at Teheran, became more strongly outlined at Yalta. The supposed zone of ' no man's land ' between the three Great Powers, over which they had agreed upon a joint action, did not in fact exist, for as far as the Red Army could reach, the N.K.V.D. had virtually erected a great wall of China.

The ' Lublin Committee ' was to be the core for the formation or rather the re-construction into a ' Provisional Polish Government ' on a " broader democratic basis with the inclusion of democratic leaders from Poland itself and from Poles abroad." A foretaste of what Moscow meant by this broadening of its puppet government, which in itself was anti-democratic enough (it consisted of unknown men elevated to their position by the Soviet's aid and brought to Poland in the wake of the Red Army), can be judged from the fact that on the same day when the news of the announcement of the Crimean Declaration reached London, the sixteenth concentration camp had been established at Lubartov near Lublin by the Soviet authorities, and that 6,000 Polish officers and privates were the first batch to be imprisoned there. And on the same day a representative of this ' Lublin Committee,' a certain Colonel Spychalski (there was no note of him in the Polish Army lists), a deputy of General Zymierski, broadcast: "The traitors Sosnkowski, Raczkiewicz, Arciszewski, Mikolajczyk and B'r-Komorowski of capitulation fame, will receive well-deserved punishment We shall deal with them in the same way as the Government of the Soviet Ukraine dealt with the Ukraine nationalist lackeys of Hitler " After such and similar statements by the Comintern agents on the radio station controlled by Moscow, there was little hope that Stalin would permit of free elections in Poland after the Western pattern. There never had been any elections of that kind under the Soviet régime. In Russia the election was considered as proof of the effectiveness of the party—i.e, the state machinery—and it invariably showed almost one hundred per cent. efficiency. Stalin had already explained to his people that the polling undertaken in the countries of the Democracy was ' framed,' and it was hardly to be expected that he would condone such 'manœuvring' under his regime. In any case, the wording of the Declaration itself killed any faint hope of a democratic election—for it was announced that they were open only to ' democratic and anti-Nazi

parties.' Molotov one of the leaders of a totalitarian state was to decide which party in Poland was 'democratic and anti-Nazi', while every politician in Poland was denounced as Hitler's collaborator—the most eminent citizens of the country headed the Soviet list.

Since the 'Lublin Committee' chosen as a basis of the future Polish Government had no legal foundation, nothing built on it could have legal status. *Quod ab initio vitiosum est nullo modo convalscere potest.* There was some attempt made in the Declaration to justify this choice, by explaining that the 'Lublin Committee' was not yet entirely representative since it did not contain members from 'liberated' Western Poland. Did this mean in principle then that the signatories accepted the Russian theory regarding this 'Committee' as being representative of that part of Poland which the Red Army was now occupying, and which Moscow permitted to still be considered Poland? The attitude of the leaders of the Atlantic Democracies who continued to recognise the Polish Government as the legitimate Government and as representative of the whole of Poland however, gave a denial to any such supposition

There was no possibility of Moscow, who intended to keep what the Red Army had occupied, ever being persuaded to agree to a really independent Polish Government. Therefore any 'new' Government would under Soviet control merely be the expression of Russia's policy.

The only ray of hope in the blackness of the Crimea Declaration was that the United States seemed at last to be entering into the affairs of Europe—the Atlantic was now no greater obstacle for modern warfare than the Mediterranean had been in 1939 The two Great Wars had convinced the American ruling class of the folly of isolationism, but this change of policy actuated by Roosevelt coincided with the partitioning of a country, which, according to the same Roosevelt had been the 'inspiration' to fighting democracy. Only six weeks had passed since Stettinius, the United States Foreign Secretary, had explained in an official statement that the United States could not guarantee any specific frontier in Europe, and yet Roosevelt at the Crimea, together with Stalin and Churchill, was considering the line the Polish Eastern frontier was to follow. Was not this the equivalent to a guarantee regarding this frontier? According to the previous statement of Stettinius, this would have been incompatible with the American Constitution. In 1919 at Versailles, the American delegates had participated in the determination of the frontiers in Europe—but all their work was rendered useless later when the United States Senate refused to accept Wilson's thesis. It might well be asked what then would be the outcome of this delineation of one frontier of Poland if the remaining frontiers and those of the other countries were to await the Peace Conference?

It cannot be denied that after the Crimean deal, the guarantee of Britain and the United States which had appeared so precious to the Polish people in those dark years, now seemed valueless. Resigning

from any restoration of the Polish Republic, London decided to recognise as Poland's representatives, only those who were prepared to comply with its wishes, i.e., to renounce half Poland and release England from her commitments

The fact that Russia had intimated that the fate of Poland also concerned the Atlantic Democracies was of relative value—although it meant they had the right to intervene regarding that country if they so wished, but it was already evident that any intervention concerning Poland on the part of London and Washington would and did not have the slightest effect in Moscow. The mild remonstrances coming from the British and American Foreign Offices over the arrested, deported and murdered soldiers of the Home Army, the disappearance of politicians and leading elements, met with evasiveness or an unwillingness to give any explanation.

The most significant issue of the Crimea was that the Atlantic Democracies in signing the Declaration had voluntarily taken on themselves a share in the responsibility for the Soviet's action in the countries of the Middle Zone, particularly with regard to their Allies, Poland and Yugoslavia—for the mass murders, deportations, imprisonment, and above all for the creation of the Soviet vassal states, the prelude to the Soviet Republics west of the ' Ribbentrop-Molotov Line '

It cannot be said that any narrowing of the area of human misery and suffering, the aim of peace-makers, had been achieved by this step. A territory of 150,000 square miles east of that ' Line ' containing over 23 million peoples in 1939, had been assigned to the Soviet Union,—in other words written-off the face of the Western world, and an area west of that ' Line ' four times larger, with a population four times greater, lying between Stettin and Trieste, i.e. the remainder of the Middle Zone was left in the power of the Soviets, in the chains of ' liberation ' Dismissing the Conference, Josef Vissarionovich Stalin might well have congratulated himself on his astuteness

The signatories of the Crimea Declaration accepted the ruling that Poland should receive substantial compensation in the form of territory in the North and West, but they proved to be in no hurry to define the extent of this compensation hinting that they might perhaps find something yet for further bargaining with the Kremlin. Later in his speech Churchill was to delineate this ' compensation ' as being the remainder of Upper Silesia and the southern part of Eastern Prussia, about a quarter the extent of the territory being torn from Poland on the east. The Soviets, who then had the ' Committee of German Generals ' as a potential Government of Germany and as a threat to the Allies, waiting in the anti-chamber, were in no hurry to stipulate (except for part of East Prussia) which German provinces were to be assigned to Poland. They rather ambiguously referred to them as ' lands wrested from Poland by Germany ' and left the ' Lublin Committee ' to emphatically and strictly

define the future Western frontier of Poland as being on the Oder and the Lusatian Nissa, that is, in square miles, roughly half of what Poland was to lose in the East.

However, all this talk of compensation was to prove a fallacy when, after the Yalta agreement, the Polish independence faded into the mists of the ' might-have been '. . .

The Polish Republic was to be partitioned, not between sovereign Powers but between Soviet White Ruthenia, Soviet Lithuania, Soviet Ukraine and the Soviet Polish Republics of the Soviet Union. In the eighteenth century as in 1939, Poland had indeed been partitioned, but in 1945, with the strict centralisation of the Soviet Republics to Moscow, and taking into consideration that the Republics have less home-rule than the counties of England, it was simply the annexation of the whole of Poland by Russia. The ' compensation ' at Germany's expense only meant that these provinces Poland was to receive, would be incorporated into the Soviet Union as part of a new Stalin's Poland. The odium of ' compensation ' would be with Poland, the profit with Russia. It would merely be a repetition of the story of the ' Curzon Line ' which had already ceased to be a problem as far as the Soviets were concerned, the N.K.V.D. authorities had long since been installed and their machinery was in motion throughout the whole of Poland, in Wilno as in Warsaw, in Lwów as in Poznan.

In their Statement of February 13, the Polish Government referred to the Yalta verdict as the ' Fifth Partition ' of their country, and the British Government banned the broadcasting of this Statement. The phrase, however, did not correspond with the reality. The former partitions had been executed by enemy Powers who had divided the booty among themselves At the Crimea the decision was taken by the Allies of Poland, the Powers who claimed to be ' Poland's friends '.

The Polish Government found it difficult to conceal their bitterness over the Crimean ' considerations ' of the Big Three. On February 13, they spoke bluntly :—

" On February 12 at 7-30 p m. the British Foreign Office handed to the Polish Ambassador in London the text of the resolutions concerning Poland adopted by President Roosevelt, Prime Minister Churchill and Marshal Stalin at the Yalta Conference between February 4 and 11.

" Before the Conference began the Polish Government handed to the Governments of Great Britain and the United States a Memorandum in which the hope was expressed that these Governments would not be a party to any decision regarding the allied Polish State without previous consultation and without the consent of the Polish Government At the same time, the Polish Government declared itself willing to seek the solution of the dispute initiated by Soviet Russia through normal international procedure and with due respect for the rights of the two parties concerned.

" In spite of this, the decisions of the Three-Power Conference were prepared and taken, not only without the participation and authorisation of the Polish Government but also without its knowledge.

" The method adopted in the case of Poland is a contradiction of the elementary principles binding the allies and constitutes a violation of the letter and spirit of the Atlantic Charter and the right of every nation to defend its own interests

" The Polish Government declares that the decisions of the Three-Power Conference concerning Poland cannot be recognised by the Polish Government and cannot bind the Polish nation. The Polish nation will consider the severance of the eastern half of the territory of Poland, through the imposition of a Polish-Soviet frontier following the so-called ' Curzon Line,' as a fifth partition of Poland now accomplished by her Allies. The intention of the three Powers to create a ' Provisional Polish Government of National Unity ' by enlarging the foreign-appointed Lublin Committee with persons vaguely described as ' democratic leaders from Poland itself and Poles abroad ' can only legalise Soviet interference in Polish internal affairs As long as the territory of Poland remains under the sole occupation of Soviet troops a Government of that kind will not safeguard to the Polish nation, even in the presence of British and American diplomats, the unfettered rights of free expression

" The Polish Government, who are the sole legal and generally recognised Government of Poland, and who for five and a half years had directed the struggle of the Polish State and nation against the Axis countries, both through the Underground Movement in the homeland and through the Polish armed forces in all theatres of war, has expressed its readiness—in a Memorandum presented to the Governments of Great Britain and the United States—to co-operate in the creation of a Government in Poland truly representative of the will of the Polish nation. The Polish Government maintains its offer "

The opinion of the Polish nation regarding the Yalta decisions was expressed in this Statement. It was seldom that any Government had a more unanimous backing of the country than Arciszewski's in that tragic hour. For the first time in their appraisal of events the word ' tragic ' was employed by Polish spokesmen and Press In 1939, when the invaders had burst into Poland and partitioned the land between them, when, with savage sadism they had trampled on the country, dispersing its people as slaves, scattering them eastward through the vast areas of Siberia to Vladivostok and Kamchatka, and westward, throughout Europe, and when Hitler and Stalin, their hands clasped in friendship for two years, had repeated and re-affirmed that the ' Polish State will never rise again ', there had been no despair. The Poles knew this friendship was against the very nature of things. They knew when the German Army once more passed like a whirlwind across Poland and stormed on into Russia, that this Army would be beaten And when the Russians in pursuit of the Germans fought their way yet again across Poland, her people, despite bitter lessons, did all within their power to help, because they had faith in the word of honour of their Allies Poland had begun the war alone, but from the third day she had fought as a member of the Coalition and Poland believed that she would not be abandoned at the end of the battle. The Polish people were convin-

ced that the forces which endeavoured to submerge their country, would in the end be tamed on Poland's frontiers—as tamed they must be somewhere, for despotism like water spreads in all directions. . . .

The representatives of the Atlantic Democracies fell into the trap prepared for them at the Crimea and in order to save their own estates which seemed to be in danger, handed over the flesh and blood of the Western world to the rule of the Muscovites, to the 'dispensation' which the Two Leaders of that world had condemned so many times. For one whole year from February 22, 1944 when Churchill had announced the step the British Government had decided to take, the Polish people refused to believe that such a move was possible, now for the first time they used the word 'tragic', now they knew they had been betrayed. . . Little information was available for the Polish people in their country, 'blacked-out' first by Germany and now by Moscow, they knew nothing of the great political gambles, they only knew that the two Great Powers of the Western world were handing them over to the slaughter. Waves of calumny invented by Moscow for the express purpose of disintegrating and annihilating the foundations of Christian civilisation began to roll throughout the countries of the Atlantic Democracies and over the world submerging the truth regarding Poland.

The Government of that country alone, and none other among the governments of the world, dared at this time to call a spade a spade and a murder what it was—a murder, and " their words, like red hot coals burnt the conscience of those in the world who still considered truth and honour to be a necessary and vital part of the individual and of the community." Their Premier Arciszewski said :—

" The decision taken at Crimea was a great blow to the Polish nation. We shall never surrender to slavery and to the new partition of Poland made at the same time by our Allies

"The Polish nation does not believe in the words of Russia when Russia promises free democracy for Poland. Nor do we believe that if some new people are included in the proposed new Government to be set up in Poland it will be any more free than it is now, or any more free than the Governments of Rumania or Bulgaria "

These words were spoken at a Press Conference and one of the reporters asked :

" Does your Government propose to do anything except sit in London and talk ? "

" To this," the *Daily Mail* noted, " there was a prompt, clever and dignified reply, with a suggestion of a threat in it ' Of course you may think that expressions of opinion by this Government are superfluous, but, under the orders of my Government are important forces on land, sea and air ; and that is more than talking.' "

But was there in fact any ' suggestion of a threat ' in this reply ? A few days later Churchill summoned General Anders, Commander of the Polish Forces in Italy and at that time the highest ranking officer in the Army,—the post of Commander-in-Chief held by General Bór being

vacant whilst he remained a prisoner in German hands Anders had heard the outcome of the Yalta Conference while in Italy and had sent a telegram to the President of the Polish Republic to the effect that his troops, " do not recognise and shall never recognise unilateral decisions," and that " for his soldiers only the President was representing Poland." There has been the general assumption regarding the Churchill-Anders talk, that it might be classified as one of the attempts on the part of the British Prime Minister to find a suitable tool among the Poles abroad to serve his Russian policy. But Anders, like the majority of his men, had already passed through the Soviet dungeons and like them he had no intention of going there again Therefore any discussion with Anders seemed useless and it can certainly be assumed that had the British Government recognised the 'Lublin Committee' at this stage, there would have been no question of the Polish Army continuing its fight. The battle of Germany was still raging, Polish troops numbered over 200,000 and were rapidly increasing with every liberated mile of France, Belgium and Holland and,—they were still useful. A few days after this interview Anders was given a temporary appointment as Commander-in-Chief, thus technically giving the British Prime Minister, the opportunity of talking with him in this new capacity. Churchill would then be speaking with an officer who had authority to discuss any problem connected with the Polish Army in the Anglo-American zone of war.

The prompt and characteristic reaction of the British Foreign Office to Anders' appointment was that it had been made without the cognisance and approval of that Office, as if justifying in anticipation a criticism from Moscow The new Polish C-in-C., issued his first order of the day on April 26 :—

" I am assuming the duties of Commander-in-Chief of the Polish armed forces under orders from the President of the Republic, in Poland's direst hour The Polish armed forces remain the expression and the token of the sovereignty of the Polish Republic . . With our standards covered with glory we are facing the greatest tragedy of our nation

' The eyes of all Poles scattered throughout the world, and in particular of our countrymen in our martyred home country, are hopefully directed upon us

" They know that we shall continue on our hard, soldierly path in accordance with our oath under the orders of the President, the lawful representative of the sovereignty of the Polish Republic, and under the directions of our lawful Government.

" If strangers, or people of small heart, ask you what are you fighting for, you will reply that the Polish soldier to-day is fighting for the same object for which he went into battle five years ago , that force should not prevail over law and justice, neither in our country nor in the world."

The following extracts from the Polish press throw some lights on the reaction of the Poles to the sequence of events The *Polish Thought* (London) wrote :—

" Poland has contributed something more in this war than just her share of the battle on every front Participation in the fight is a soldier's normal duty But beyond all this, Poland formed an army underground which for five and a half years fought in her country against the common enemy—continually attacking the rear of that enemy. It helped to weaken the German war-machine, and fulfilled many undertaking desired by the Allies, in the accomplishment of which several million Polish citizens met their deaths

" The Allies wished these undertakings to be carried out and were therefore jointly responsible, to say nothing of the ancient custom of the solidarity of comrade-in-arms, recognised throughout the centuries, and established in the common soldierly toil Yalta's declaration had many chapters, but not one of them mentioned that these veterans of five and a half years' fighting in Poland might receive a reward by freeing them from torture, prisons, deportation and shooting.

" Responsibility is not limited to the past but is extended to the future. At Teheran and Yalta, Poland's Allies were affirming that the Poles were not responsible enough to speak for themselves, and others knew better than they what was good for their country. The Polish viewpoint, stabilised by a voluntary agreement between the Allies and sworn to by blood commonly shed, was opposed to political circumstances and duress Not only was it opposed, but they endeavoured by hook or by crook—perhaps it would be more tactful not to discuss the methods—to enforce it on Poland

" But together with the execution of their designs, and as is indissolubly linked with it, so they took on the responsibility for the future. If the Poles were stubborn in their decision, if they were against the clauses of Yalta, it was not out of sheer obstinacy, for it was with a clear-sighted vision of Europe to be. The persons who considered themselves capable of solving the Polish problem in the face of the Polish opinion, and who after their endeavours reached the conclusion that they had come no nearer solving it, but had only served as a tool and had been used to gain time for that harvest of torture and death, those persons are accepting responsibility, greater and more serious than has ever been the lot of one man . "

One of the main Polish press organs in America, *Dziennik Polski* commented on the Crimean decision in similar terms :—

" On February 12, the Atlantic Charter was finally torn to shreds. It was torn up by its creators and replaced by the Soviet's Black Charter, the Charter which not only held Democracy to ridicule but openly sneered at all the laws of God and man Might before right, appeared in that Soviet Black Charter , heroism and human sacrifice were set at nought Vows and solemn promises broken and the elementary rights of the people were violated

" The most tragic action committed during the Crimean Conference was the decision to partition Poland. Representatives of Soviet Russia, Great Britain and the United States jointly signed a statement whereby they committed themselves to take by force from the Polish Republic half her territories with her ancient fortress of Polish and Western civilisation, Wilno and Lwów, and to illegally hand over these territories and cities to the Soviet Dictator. And in so doing, the representatives of England and the United States put their signatures to the act of the fourth partition of Poland, carried out by the Ribbentrop-Molotov division of September 28, 1939.

"At the time when Ribbentrop and Molotov had partitioned Poland, British opinion clearly expressed its attitude to this crime . . . ' Cynical aggression ' Chamberlain had claimed.

" The partition of Poland is the first act of the new peace and the signatures of President Roosevelt and the Prime Minister Churchill are appended thereto. Whether such a peace is lasting or not the future will reveal in a very short time Anyone knowing the history of the Polish people will realise that it is an impossibility to erect a lasting peace over the grave of that nation

" The partition of Poland at Yalta by Russia, England and America was perpetuated in the same way as the fourth partition had been accomplished by Hitler and Stalin. Just as in Moscow in 1939, all rules and customs of war to which mankind has adhered since civilisation first began were omitted at Yalta in 1945. The living body of a nation was carved up without regard to its will, and without considering any sworn obligations given to it by Russia and England and without the knowledge even of its legal Government.

" Poland is an Ally The Allies have treated this Ally with a contempt which they have not accorded their worst foe. They were forcing a frontier on Poland depriving her of the possibility of life, and in the same declaration honoured Germany to the extent of postponing the determination of its frontiers until the Peace Conference, until the moment when the surrender of that country would place in their hands the right to determine its fate legally. The Polish Ally was regarded as a signatory whom it would be useless to consult as to whether or not it would give way and agree to this enforcement of the foreign will on its country.

" If there existed any international act which flouted established law and order—it was this Black Charter, concocted and signed at the Crimea. What lawful titles did the representatives of England and the United States hold enabling them to decide over the fate of millions of Polish citizens or to preside over the fate of the Polish State ? In this instance they did not even possess the most barbaric of rights—the right of conquest . . They had not overcome Poland, whom they now wished to carve up . They had not fought with her at all. On the contrary, they had benefitted by her services, by her sacrifice, heroism and faithfulness . . . And has faithfulness, sacrifice and heroism ever justified the murder of the one who keeps his word and who has been the comrade in the battle ? There is not in the Constitution of the United States or England, or anywhere in the world, a rule, custom or precedence which entitled the representatives of the United States and England to usurp rights greater than the Almighty Himself. The Polish Nation refuses to give President Roosevelt and Churchill the right to put it to death

" If there is in the history of mankind any act which set at nought the principles of democracy—the Soviet Black Charter was it. The principle of democracy is, equality within the law. Where is this equality, if the fate of the Polish Ally is decided behind its back and to its detriment ? The principle of democracy is esteem for the rights of the individual—more even, the rights of millions of individuals. This Crimean decision is handing over twelve million Polish citizens into Soviet slavery. It hands them over into Soviet slavery for ever, bringing up the children and grand-children of these free people who were living on free Polish soil as Russian slaves Was their wish ever taken into consideration ? Were they even asked ? Were their rights taken into consideration ? Once in the days of Lincoln, America was bathed in blood so that a few million black slaves, living in paradise when compared to the lives of those Poles given into Soviet slavery, should be released into freedom ! Have our sons and brothers to give their lives in order to place into Soviet slavery the hundreds and millions of free people ? Was it to be a fight for democracy or against democracy ? "

THE AMENDMENT

We started this war with great motives and high ideals and we published the Atlantic Charter and then spat on it and stamped it and burnt it, as it were, at the stake, and now nothing is left of it.

(Rhys Davies, House of Commons, March 1, 1945)

One Polish soldier was heard to comment, " On the boundless ocean they signed the Atlantic Charter of freedom for the world . . . and on the imprisoned Black Sea, in Russia, they signed the Black Charter of Slavery and Death for our people . . "

The British Parliament was the one free institution in Europe where the men of every existing party in the country could speak freely on the politics of their own and other governments and the principles of democracy.

This Parliament, which in the early days of 1945, had sat in debate on the ' hard bargaining ' undertaken at the Crimea, was the more responsible for the action of its Government, for it was these same men, the same representatives of Britain who had encouraged Poland to withstand the Nazi fury in 1939, and under whose auspices the Anglo-Polish Treaty was signed, and who, through its leaders had issued promise after promise, swearing to fight until the independence of Poland was restored. This was the Parliament who had declared war and driven Chamberlain out for not being warlike enough. The Conservative Party had made the Treaty with Poland and the others had supported it with every emphasis. They had been unanimously firm in their determination to fulfil this Treaty On this ground Henderson had spoken firmly to Hitler on August 29, 1939 :—

" We in England regarded it as absurd that Britain should be supposed by the German Government to consider the crushing of Germany as a settled policy We held it to be no less astonishing that anyone in Germany should doubt for a moment that we would not fight for Poland if her independence or her interests were threatened. Our word was our word, and we had never and would never break it." Hitler said he wanted Britain's friendship. Henderson asked, " What value would he place on our friendship if we began it by disloyalty to a friend ? "

It was over five years ago. During this period Poland had fulfilled her part of the Treaty—she had fought under circumstances and on a scale unequalled by any other nation of the world Her country was in the grip of a super-human terror, her people dispersed from the Atlantic to the Pacific throughout Europe and Russian Asia, but where-ever they were they fought against the Germans. They fought for Poland and Britain, as for the unique stronghold of European freedom, hoping that from this stronghold would come their liberation. Millions of Poles gave their lives in the battle of the Underground in Poland but thousands

had fallen on the British Isles, on the seas encircling it, and on the roads of the Continent leading to that Island. And now, in the sixth year of war when the British freedom had already been secured, when the freedom of Poland was hanging in the balance, the British Parliament was to open a discussion as to whether or how they should fulfil the Treaty and whether and if, they should secure the freedom of their Ally, to support or reject their Government's proposal regarding the future of their Ally. . . .

On the eve of the Debate a group of the former members of the Polish Senate and the Diet who were in Britain addressed the Members of both the House of Commons and the House of Lords :—

" We address the British Parliament as the legislative body of a great State to which our country is bound by alliance, and as the Mother of Parliaments. In it we have always seen not only the symbol, but the impregnable fortress of true democracy. Its supreme dignity has strengthened in us the conviction that its power will always adhere to the side of law and justice between men and nations, will stand in defence of those who are wronged by acts of violence, and will prevent International Law from becoming an empty invocation or a mere scrap of paper.

" In 1939 the British Parliament approved the guarantee given to the Polish Republic by His Majesty's Government as well as the alliance which was concluded, and in 1941 it approved the Atlantic Charter. Nevertheless, and in spite of the decisive victories gained over German might and the rapidly approaching end of Hitler's rule, the independence of our country remains in grave jeopardy .

" The Soviet Forces have already occupied more than half our territory, and there are, as yet, no signs of the restoration of any national institutions based on the principles of democracy and social freedom. We know that in France, Belgium, Holland and even in Italy, a state formerly allied to the enemy, as soon as circumstances allow, after clearing these territories of the Germans, power is being returned to the appropriate national authorities.

" In Poland conditions are different.

" Our country is still torn apart, not so much by the so-called ' Curzon Line,' as by a frontier drawn in 1939 by Herr von Ribbentrop and Mr. Molotov. Polish territory east of that line—including the two cities of Lwów and Wilno, beloved of every Polish heart—have been arbitrarily declared by the Soviets as part of their own territory against a primary principle of International Law.

" In these provinces, deportations are rife on lines similar to those of 1939 and 1940 . . . There are no military considerations which could, then or now, justify these deportations . . We are denied detailed information about these territories or of the fate of our relatives, friends and countrymen inhabiting them

" West of the Ribbentrop-Molotov Line . . one hears of the restoration of a strong and independent Poland. In the light of past events, however, we cannot but feel deep anxiety about the meaning of this formula. The so-called Lublin Committee of Liberation, set up by the Soviet Military authorities, is solely and entirely an agent of the Soviet Government . . . In the part of Poland occupied by the Soviet Army there is no democratic institution, nor any trace of freedom of association of the Press . . . We

appeal to the Members of the British Parliament to lend their voice to an opinion which would contribute to :—

" 1. Dissuading the Soviet authorities from continuing the deportations of the citizens of Poland to Russia ;

" 2. Extending to these territories the beneficial activities of the Red Cross or other institutions aiming at the relief of distress ,

" 3. The recognition by the Soviets of the combatant status of the Polish Home Army ,

" 4 The granting to our country the similar rights to that afforded to France, Belgium, Holland and Italy "

This historic Debate began on February 27. The British Prime Minister spoke at 12 noon, asking Parliament to formally express their attitude as " a strong expression of support will strengthen the Government's opinion." He called on them not to " shrink from judgment where such high issue was at stake " and he asked them to declare their faith in him by passing a vote of confidence.

" I beg to move," he began,

" That this House approves the declaration of joint policy agreed to by the three great Powers at the Crimea Conference and, in particular, welcomes their determination to maintain unity of action not only in achieving the final defeat of the common enemy but, thereafter, in peace as in war."

And he proceeded to speak on Poland.

" I now come to the most difficult and agitating part of the statement which I have to make to the House—the question of Poland. For more than a year past, and since the tide of war has turned so strongly against Germany, the Polish problem has been divided into two main issues—the frontiers of Poland and the freedom of Poland

" The House is well aware from the speeches I have made to them that the freedom, independence, integrity and sovereignty of Poland have always seemed to His Majesty's Government more important than the actua frontiers. To establish a free Polish nation with a good home to live in, has always far outweighed, in my mind, the actual tracing of the frontier line, or whether these boundaries should be shifted on both sides of Poland further to the west. The Russian claim, first advanced at Teheran in November, 1943, has always been unchanged for the Curzon Line in the East, and the Russian offer has always been that ample compensation should be gained for Poland at the expense of Germany in the north and in the west.

. I have never concealed from the House that, personally, I think the Russian claim is just and right If I champion this frontier for Russia, it is not because I bow to force. It is because I believe it is the fairest division of territory that can, in all the circumstances, be made between the two countries whose history has been so chequered and inter-mingled

" The Curzon Line was drawn up in 1919 by an expert Commission, of which one of our most distinguished foreign representatives of those days, Sir Eyre Crowe, was a member. It was drawn at a time when Russia had few friends among the Allies In fact, I may say that she was extremely unpopular One cannot feel that either the circumstances or the personalities concerned would have given undue favour to Soviet Russia They just tried to find out what was the right and proper line to draw. The British Government in those days approved this Line, including, of course, the

exclusion of Lwów from Poland * Apart from all that has happened since, I cannot conceive that we should not regard it as a well-informed and fair proposal.

"There are two things to be remembered in justice to our great Ally. I can look back to August, 1914, when Germany first declared war against Russia under the Tsar. In those days, the Russian frontiers on the west were far more spacious than those for which Russia is now asking after all her sufferings and victories. The Tsarist frontiers included all Finland and the whole of the vast Warsaw salient stretching to within 60 miles of Breslau. Russia is, in fact, accepting a frontier which over immense distances is 200 or 300 miles further to the east than what was Russian territory and had been Russian territory for many generations under the Tsarist regime Marshal Stalin told me one day that Lenin objected to the Curzon Line because Bialystok and the region round it were taken from Russia.† Marshal Stalin and the modern Soviet Government make no such claim and freely agree with the view taken by the Allied Commission of 1919 that the Bialystok region should go to Poland because of the Polish population predominating there

"We speak of the Curzon Line. A line is not a frontier A frontier has to be surveyed and traced on the ground and not merely cut in on a map by a pencil and ruler When my right hon Friend and I were at Moscow in October, Marshal Stalin made this point to me, and at that time he said that there might be deviations of 8 to 10 kilometres in either direction in order to follow the courses of streams and hills or the actual sites of particular villages It seems to me that this was an eminently sensible way of looking at the problem However, when we met at Yalta the Russian proposal was changed. It was made clear that all such minor alterations would be at the expense of Russia and not at the expense of Poland in order that the Poles might have their minds set at rest once and for all and there would be no further discussion about that part of the business. We welcomed this Soviet proposal.

". . There is a second reason which appeals to me . . But for the prodigious exertions and sacrifices of Russia, Poland was doomed to utter destruction at the hands of the Germans Not only Poland as a State and as a nation, but the Poles as a race were doomed by Hitler to be destroyed or reduced to a servile station. Three and a half million Polish Jews are said to have been actually slaughtered It is certain that enormous numbers have perished in one of the most horrifying acts of cruelty, probably the most horrifying act of cruelty, which has ever darkened the passage of man on the earth When the Germans had clearly avowed their intention of making the Poles a subject and lower grade race under the Herrenvolk,

*) It is difficult to accept that this chapter was strictly in accord with history (See p 234) In 1919 Britain and France were both at war with Russia and there was no question of defining Poland's frontiers The 'Line' was a temporary measure — Professor Paton stated, (*A History of the Peace Conference of Paris* Vol VI, p 275) "at the time it (this line) was drawn up only as a provisional minimum frontier (of Poland) and that both the French and the Americans believed that the final line should be further to the East"

†) There is no confirmation of any such objection to the 'Curzon Line' on the part of Lenin in the records of history On December 22, 1919, a fortnight after the definition by 'an expert Commission' of the line of December 8, the Soviets, through the medium of J Marchlewski, offered Poland a frontier 250 miles eastward of the future 'Curzon Line' still including historic Poland, and one hundred miles to the east of the frontier of the Riga Treaty This Soviet proposal was repeated formally by the Soviets in a note of January 29, 1920, and signed by Lenin, Chicherin and Trotsky.

suddenly, by a superb effort of military force and skill, the Russian Armies, in little more than three weeks, since, in fact, we spoke on these matters here, have advanced from the Vistula to the Oder, driving the Germans in ruin before them and freeing the whole of Poland from the awful cruelty and oppression under which the Poles were writhing.

" In supporting the Russian claim to the Curzon Line, I repudiate and repulse any suggestion that we are making a questionable compromise or yielding to force or fear, and I assert with the utmost conviction the broad justice of the policy upon which, for the first time, all the three great Allies have now taken their stand. Moreover, the three Powers have now agreed that Poland shall receive substantial accessions of territory both in the north and in the west In the north she will certainly receive, in the place of a precarious Corridor, the great city of Danzig, the greater part of East Prussia west and south of Koenigsberg and a long, wide sea front on the Baltic. In the west she will receive the important industrial province of Upper Silesia and, in addition, such other territories to the east of the Oder as it may be decided at the peace settlement to detach from Germany after the views of a broadly based Polish Government have been ascertained

" Thus, it seems to me that this talk of cutting half of Poland off is very misleading In fact, the part which is to be east of the Curzon Line cannot in any case be measured by its size. It includes the enormous, dismal region of the Pripet Marshes, which Poland held between the two wars, and it exchanges for that the far more fruitful and developed land in the West, from which a very large portion of the German population has already departed. We need not fear that the task of holding these new lines will be too heavy for Poland, or that it will bring about another German revenge or that it will, to use a conventional phrase, sow the seeds of future wars. We intend to take steps far more drastic and effective than those which followed the last war, because we know much more about this business, so as to render all offensive action by Germany utterly impossible for generations to come.

" Finally, under the world organisation of nations great and small, victors and vanquished will be secured against aggression by indisputable law and by overwhelming international force The published Crimea Agreement is not a ready-made plan, imposed by the great Powers on the Polish people It sets out the agreed views of the three major Allies on the means whereby their common desire to see established a strong, free, independent Poland, may be fulfilled in co-operation with the Poles themselves, and whereby a Polish Government which all the United Nations can recognise may be set up in Poland. This has become for the first time a possibility now that practically the whole country has been liberated by the Soviet Army The fulfilment of the plan will depend upon the willingness of all sections of democratic Polish opinion in Poland or abroad to work together in giving it effect. The plan should be studied as a whole, and with the main common objective always in view. The three Powers are agreed that acceptance by the Poles of the provisions on the Eastern Frontiers and, so far as can now be ascertained on the Western Frontiers, is an essential condition of the establishment and future welfare and security of a strong, independent, homogenous Polish State

The proposals on frontiers are in complete accordance, as the House will remember, with the views expressed by me in Parliament on behalf of His Majesty's Government many times during the past year. I ventured to make pronouncements upon this subject at a time when a great measure of agreement was not expressed by the other important parties to the affair.

The Eastern frontier must be settled now, if the new Polish administration is to be able to carry on its work in its own territory, and to do this in amity with the Russians and behind their fighting fronts The Western frontiers, which will involve a substantial accession of German territory to Poland, cannot be fixed except as part of the whole German settlement until after the Allies have occupied German territory and after a fully representative Polish Government has been able to make its wishes known. It would be a great mistake to press Poland to take a larger portion of these lands than is considered by her and by her friends and Allies to be within her compass to man, to develop, and, with the aid of the Allies and the world organisation, to maintain.

" I have now dealt with the frontiers of Poland. I must say I think it is a case which I can outline with great confidence to the House An impartial line traced long ago by a British commission in which Britain took a leading part, the moderation with which the Russians have strictly confined themselves to that line, the enormous sacrifices they have made and the sufferings they have undergone, the contributions they have made to our present victory; the great interest, the vital interest, which Poland has in having complete agreement with her powerful neighbour in the East—when you consider all those matters and the way they have been put forward, the temperate, patient manner in which they have been put forward and discussed, I say that I have rarely seen a case in this House which I could commend with more confidence to the good sense of Members of all sides.

" But even more important than the frontiers of Poland, within the limits now disclosed, is the freedom of Poland. The home of the Poles is settled. Are they to be masters in their own house? Are they to be free, as we in Britain and the United States or France are free? Is their sovereignty and their independence to be untrammelled, or are they to become a mere projection of the Soviet State, forced against their will, by an armed minority, to adopt a Communist or totalitarian system? Well, I am putting the case in all its bluntness. It is a touchstone far more sensitive and vital than the drawing of frontier lines. Where does Poland stand? Where do we all stand on this?

" Most solemn declarations have been made by Marshal Stalin and the Soviet Union that the sovereign independence of Poland is to be maintained, and this decision is now joined in both by Great Britain and the United States. Here also, the world organisation will in due course assume a measure of responsibility. The Poles will have their future in their own hands, with the single limitation that they must honestly follow, in harmony with their Allies, a policy friendly to Russia. That is surely reasonable .

" The procedure which the three Great Powers have unitedly adopted to achieve this vital aim is set forth in unmistakable terms in the Crimea declaration. The agreement provides for consultation, with a view to the establishment in Poland of a new Polish Provisional Government of National Unity, with which the three major Powers can all enter into diplomatic relations, instead of some recognising one Polish Government and the rest another, a situation which, if it had survived the Yalta Conference, would have proclaimed to the world disunity and confusion. We had to settle it, and we settled it there. No binding restrictions have been imposed upon the scope and method of these consultations His Majesty's Government intend to do all in their power to ensure that they shall be as wide as possible and that representative Poles of all democratic parties are given full freedom to come and make their views known Arrangements for this are now being made in Moscow by the Commission of three, comprising M. Molotov, and

Mr. Harriman and Sir Archibald Clark Kerr, representing the United States and Great Britain respectively. It will be for the Poles themselves, with such assistance as the Allies are able to give them, to agree upon the composition and constitution of the new Polish Government of National Unity Thereafter, His Majesty's Government, through their representative in Poland, will use all their influence to ensure that the free elections to which the new Polish Government will be pledged shall be fairly carried out under all proper democratic safeguards

Our two guiding principles in dealing with all these problems of the Continent and of liberated countries, have been clear While the war is on, we give help to anyone who can kill a Hun ; when the war is over we look to the solution of a free, unfettered, democratic election. Those are the two principles which this Coalition Government have applied, to the best of their ability, to the circumstances and situations in this entangled and infinitely varied development.

Lord Dunglass (*Conservative*) · " . . this point is highly important. So much depends upon the interpretation of the words which the Prime Minister is now using . For instance, is there going to be some kind of international supervision ? His interpretation will make a great difference to many of us "

The Prime Minister : " I should certainly like that, but we have to wait until the new Polish Government is set up and to see what are the proposals they make for the carrying out of these free, unfettered elections, to which they will be pledged and to which we are pledged by the responsibility we have assumed. But I have not finished Perhaps some further words of comfort may come for my Noble Friend I should be sorry if I could not reassure him that the course we have adopted is simple, direct and trustworthy The agreement does not affect the continued recognition by His Majesty's Government of the Polish Government in London. This will be maintained until such time as His Majesty's Government consider that a new Provisional Government has been properly formed in Poland, in accordance with the agreed provisions , nor does it involve the previous or immediate recognition by His Majesty's Government of the present Provisional Government which is now functioning in Poland . Let me remind the House and those who have undertaken what I regard as an honourable task, of being very careful that our affairs in Poland are regulated in accorddance with the dignity and honour of this country—I have no quarrel with them at all, only a difference of opinion on the facts, which I hope to clear away. That is all that is between us

" Let me remind them that there would have been no Lublin Committee or Lublin Provisional Government in Poland if the Polish Government in London had accepted our faithful counsel given to them a year ago. They would have entered into Poland as its active Government, with the liberating Armies of Russia Even in October, when the Foreign Secretary and I toiled night and day in Moscow, M Mikolajczyk could have gone from Moscow to Lublin, with every assurance of Marshal Stalin's friendship, and become the Prime Minister of a more broadly constructed Government, which would now be seated at Warsaw, or wherever, in view of the ruin of Warsaw, the centre of Government is placed.

" But these opportunities were cast aside. Meanwhile, the expulsion of the Germans from Poland has taken place, and of course the new Government, the Lublin Government, advanced with the victorious Russian Armies, who were received with great joy in very great areas in Poland. Many great cities changing hands without a shot fired, and with none of that

terrible business of underground armies being shot by both sides, and so forth, which we feared so much, having actually taken place during the great forward advance. These opportunities were cast aside. The Russians, who are executing and preparing military operations on the largest scale against the heart of Germany have the right to have the communications of their armies protected by an orderly countryside, under a government acting in accordance with their needs.

" It was not therefore possible, so far as recognition was concerned, to procure the dissolution of the Lublin Government as well as of the London Government simultaneously, and start from a swept table. To do that would be to endanger the success of the Russian offensive, and consequently to prolong the war, with increased loss of Russian, British and American blood. The House should read carefully again and again, those Members who have doubts, the words and the terms of the Declaration, every word of which was the subject of the most profound and searching attention by the Heads of the three Governments, and by the Foreign Secretaries and all their experts.

" How will this Declaration be carried out? How will phrases like " Free and unfettered elections on the basis of universal suffrage and secret ballot' be interpreted? Will the "new" Government be "properly" constituted, with a fair representation of the Polish people, as far as can be made practicable at the moment, and as soon as possible? Will the elections be free and unfettered? Will the candidates of all democratic parties be able to present themselves to the electors, and to conduct their campaigns? What are democratic parties? People always take different views. Even in our own country there has been from time to time an effort by one party or the other to claim that they are the true democratic party, and the rest are either Bolsheviks or Tory landlords What are democratic parties? Obviously this is capable of being settled. Will the election be what we should say was fair and free in this country, making some allowance for the great confusion and disorder which prevails? . . . There are a great number of parties in Poland We have agreed that all those that are democratic parties—not Nazi or Fascist parties or parties of collaborators with the enemy—all these will be able to take their part

" These are questions upon which we have the clearest views, in accordance with the principles of the Declaration on liberated Europe, to which all three Governments have duly subscribed It is on that basis that the Moscow Commission of three was intended to work, and it is on that basis it has already begun to work.

" The impression I brought back from the Crimea, and from all my other contacts, is that Marshal Stalin and the Soviet leaders wish to live in honourable friendship and equality with the Western democracies. I feel also that their word is their bond, I know of no Government which stands to its obligations, even in its own despite, more solidly than the Russian Soviet Government. I decline absolutely to embark here on a discussion about Russian good faith. It is quite evident that these matters touch the whole future of the world Sombre indeed would be the fortunes of mankind if some awful schism arose between the Western democracies and the Russian Soviet Union, if all the future world organisations were rent asunder, and if new cataclysms of inconceivable violence destroyed all that is left of the treasures and liberties of mankind.

" Finally, on this subject, His Majesty's Government recognise that the large forces of Polish troops, soldiers, sailors and airmen, now fighting gallantly, as they have fought during the whole war, under British command,

owe allegiance to the Polish Government in London. We have every confidence that once the new Government, more fully representative of the will of the Polish people than either the present Government in London or the Provisional Administration in Poland, has been established, and recognised by the Great Powers, means will be found of overcoming these formal difficulties in the wider interest of Poland. Above all, His Majesty's Government are resolved that as many as possible of the Polish troops shall be enabled to return in due course to Poland, of their own free will, and under every safeguard, to play their part in the future life of their country

"In any event, His Majesty's Government will never forget the debt they owe to the Polish troops who have served them so valiantly, and for all those who have fought under our command. I earnestly hope it may be possible to offer the citizenship and freedom of the British Empire, if they so desire. I am not able to make a declaration on that subject to-day because all matters affecting citizenship require to be discussed between this country and the Dominions, and that takes time. But so far as we are concerned, we should think it an honour to have such faithful and valiant warriors dwelling among us as if they were men of our own blood."

The British Prime Minister seemed to be defending his surrender at the Crimea. "Mr. Churchill" Alastair Forbes bitterly commented in the *Daily Mail*, "has to-day to face the unpalatable fact that only one man has for the past two years dared to prophecy the capitulation which the British Government has now been forced to accept on the Polish question. That man is Josef Goebbels. . . ."

On the two previous occasions when Churchill had arranged for a major debate on this Polish question he had insisted that the Polish claims should be over-ridden on the grounds that:

"Twice in our lifetime Russia has been violently assaulted by Germany. Russia has the right of re-assurance against future attacks from the West, and we are going all the way with her to see that she gets it"

A Poland there was to be, but with a Government 'friendly' to Russia, one which would never join Germany against them—although there had not been any instance in the past when Poland and Germany had united together against Russia . . . In fact, history had proved exactly to the contrary. Roosevelt adopted a similar line of argument in his report to Congress. But in his version, the Poles, encumbered with slices of Prussia were to be assured that they need have no fear of a German revenge, since the treatment of that country was to be so drastic and effective as to render all offensive action by any future Germany "utterly impossible for generations to come."

Could Churchill have been really serious when he said that the "dissolution of the Lublin Government would endanger the success of the Russian offensive, and consequently prolong the war with increased loss of Russian, British and American blood?" From this statement it would appear that the forced dissolution of the 300,000 Polish Home Army, undertaken by the Soviets while the battle was still raging, had helped to shorten the war and saved a great deal of Russian,

British and American blood. However it can safely be assumed that much of this Russian blood could have been saved had they followed the British and American example and fought in the main theatre of war, not seeking as they did the easy triumphs in the direction of the Aegean and Adriatic Seas. Russian propaganda merely defended the case by stating that the ' Lublin Committee ' and the Soviet's extermination of the Polish Home Forces were necessary in order to " protect the lines of communications behind the Red Army," as if these lines had indeed been endangered by this Polish Home Army which had begun its fight against Germany two years before the Red Army Repeating Soviet propaganda in full, the British Prime Minister in his speech mingled suggestion with fact until it was impossible for the man-in-the-street with his average knowledge of the affairs of Poland, always of remote interest to him in any case, to sort out the true facts of the situation Churchill repeated Soviet calumny about the existence of " parties of collaborators with the enemy " in Poland. He also repeated the information supplied by Moscow to the effect that " the troops of the Red Army who entered Poland were received with great joy in very great areas in Poland." The information was in itself correct but Churchill was careful not to inform the listeners that the population had followed the lead of the Home Army who met the Russians prepared to co-operate to the fullest extent. He was also careful not to inform the House of Commons that the Russians who had come into Poland erecting gallows and bringing an indescribable chaos and plunder in their wake, had changed this enthusiasm to the deepest despair.

Churchill was playing at being a realist, but it was a very unconvincing part, indeed, and one he himself found difficult to believe. His strongest line of argument on which he could have defended himself, would have meant splitting the Great Alliance from top to bottom. . . in the event of Stalin passing to the attack in the Mediterranean sector Great Britain faced disaster ! He preferred to argue in circles over territorial details, without touching on the root of the problem, passing in silence over the ' solemn pledges ' of the British and ' sacred obligations ' of which mention at that time "made sick the honest people." Forestalling the expected attack on his policy, the British Prime Minister adopted a defensive position and pathetically thrust aside the rhetorical question as to whether or not Poland was to be really independent and sovereign, and not merely the " projection of the Soviet State forced against their will by an armed minority to adopt a Communist or totalitarian system." Hastily avoiding a debate on such dangerous ground, he expressed complete confidence that the " most solemn declaration " made by Stalin and the Soviet Union will be executed in its entirety and Poland would have her " sovereignty and independence " with, however, the " single

limitations that they must honestly follow, in harmony with their Allies, a policy friendly to Russia." But what would happen when the Allied policy of being 'friendly' towards Russia or perhaps conversely when the Russian policy of being friendly to the Allies no longer suited the designs of one party or the other? Until now, loyalty to commitments had been the recognised language of international relations, but Churchill's statement on 'friendship' made at the order of the stronger Power was a novum in the language of British statesmen. In fact this argument was to become so general that shortly afterwards Professor Haldane, a member of the British Communist Party, earnestly wrote in London's *Daily Worker* that Britain must also be friendly to the Soviet Union since they would be able to bomb London from the Mainland while the British could not reach Soviet industry behind the Urals.

The 'friendliness' demanded by Russia from her weaker neighbours was not merely a matter of sentiment or promises extended and given, it was rather a question of evidence—in other words, the neighbours must give the Kremlin proof by removing all parties and groups suspected of being anti-Soviet, replacing them by Communists or if there were none, by persons chosen by Moscow Only a government comprised of such individuals could adopt a 'friendly' attitude towards the Soviet Union. It was obvious that the British Prime Minister's ideas on 'friendliness' in the international arena and the Soviet interpretation of it, were as far from each other as the North and South Poles.

The sentence in Churchill's speech to the effect that "Poland in harmony with their Allies . . . must follow a policy friendly to Russia" proved to be far from satisfactory hearing to the Kremlin, it was distinctly anti-Soviet in flavour and tended towards establishing Poland in the Allied camp—the very situation which the Kremlin aimed at preventing. An authoritative guide as to what road Poland should follow, was given by Stalin himself on May 11, 1945—the Polish Government should "carry out a policy of friendship with the Soviet Union and not a policy of a *cordon sanitaire* directed against the Soviet Union."

In Churchill's attempts to both prove the 'moderate' desires of Stalin, and to defend himself he contrasted the Soviet demands for the 'Curzon Line' with that western frontier established under Tsarist Russia, whose territories had been swollen to the extent of several thousand square miles, firstly by the partitioned Polish Commonwealth and then by the annexation of Congress Poland. Such a comparison seemed entirely irrelevant when viewed in the light of the fact that the Tsarist frontier established before the First Great War, owed its existence to force and the attempted annihilation of Poland. As the situation stood Stalin was demanding the consent of his two partners to the 'Curzon Line' pro forma, for he was already holding and annexing Poland and had expanded even further to the Oder, to Czecho-Slovakia and its boundary with Bavaria, to the Adriatic, Yugoslavia, and its boundary

with Italy and was trying to reach behind for Trieste and Carinthia. The former countries were already under the power of his gauleiters and any allied subject encountered there had at the best been expelled The Russians, as Lord Dunglass remarked in the House of Commons " have never receded from the view that in this matter (of territories) they alone are the judges, and what they have taken they will keep. . . ."

In 1941, after the signing of the Atlantic Charter, Churchill still on the ocean had sent an appeal to Europe, throwing out magnificent promises and sentimental phrases. He had called on the Poles : " Poles, the heroism of your people standing up to cruel oppressors, the courage of your soldiers, sailors and airmen shall not be forgotten. Your country shall live again and resume its rightful part in the new organisation of Europe." And now when the final defeat of Germany was expected within a few days—the British Prime Minister had so little faith in his own words regarding an independent and sovereign Poland, that all he had to offer these Polish 'soldiers, sailors and airmen,' who had fought under British operational command was . . . British citizenship ! It can only be assumed therefore that these warriors were to lose their country. . . " A very doubtful equivalent " commented the *Chicago Tribune*, " a shelter in exchange for the danger of returning to New Poland. He wanted to spare them from the experience of being under the tyranny that the Polish people will have to suffer in silence from now on." The offer of the Prime Minister proved more eloquent than his entire speech. It embarrassed those to whom it was addressed and there was a feeling among the Poles fighting alongside the British that there was something unnatural in this offer It rang in the ears of the Polish soldiers to the tune of :—' We will help you save yourselves, but you must forget your wife and children exiled in Siberia or starving in Poland under a perpetually existing threat of eventual deportation. . . '

One of the Polish soldiers' Daily's expressed their feelings in simple words :—

" We can fully appreciate the proposition (the British Prime Minister's proposition to admit us to British citizenship) and its political significance. The British Empire is prepared to extend to the Poles its most precious gift—citizenship.

" If each of us was fighting for his own ends, perhaps he would have found in British citizenship the satisfaction of his life's needs However, we are fighting for the life of Poland. In this war we have lost much in the common cause, and have been deprived of much, but two things remain, Polish citizenship and pride that we are members of a nation whose great qualities have shone out during this war, perhaps as never before in all its thousand years of history.

" There is no price, nothing which can replace or recompense us for these two valuable possessions. We have one aim, the true independence of our country and the true liberation of our nation, to whom we are the more bound because it is unhappy, ruined, threatened and misunderstood. We cannot and will not abandon our nation in its distress. The struggle for its freedom is still our duty "

Molotov giving an account to the Supreme Soviet of the U.S.S.R. on October 31, 1939 of the new achievements of Russian diplomacy remarked, with contemptuous sarcasm: "Neither British nor French guarantees were of help to Poland. To this day, in fact, nobody knows what these 'guarantees' were . . . the example of luckless Poland had recently demonstrated how little pacts of Mutual Assistance signed by some of the European Great Powers are sometimes worth. . . ."

During the course of the Debate on the Crimean Declaration the British Foreign Secretary did his utmost to prove that no-one, including himself knew of what 'these' obligations consisted. Eden was now concerned with convincing his audience that none of these guarantees had covered the eventuality of a Russian action threatening Poland's independence. . . .

Owing to the persistence of certain M.P.'s regarding this problem and their 'indiscretion' on the topic, it was necessary to clarify the situation to some degree both in the Debate and in the Press. The question had already been raised before in the House of Commons in October 1939 and the Government's representative had on this occasion answered . . . "During the negotiations which led up to the signature of the (Anglo-Polish) agreement, it was understood that the agreement should only cover the case of aggression by Germany; and the Polish Government confirm that this is so"

In "*Britain's obligations to Poland*" (Glasgow, 1945) John McKee, discussed the problem, commenting on this reply,

"That word 'understood' was rather an enigma. One meaning of the verb 'understand' is 'to assume.' But no one was interested in assumptions, the query concerned facts. If there had been an honest explicit reservation, why did the reply not read 'It was explicitly agreed'? Better still, why did the Government not publish the operative clause? 'And the Polish Government confirm that this is so' the reply ended. Would that embarrassed Government be in a position to do otherwise? On examination, the answer was not so definite after all"

And the author continued the adventures of these explanations of the British guarantee given by the British Government:—

"It was not until 15th December, 1944, that more light was thrown upon the subject. Speaking in the debate on Poland, Major Petherick, M.P., observed 'Some of us know that there was an unpublished protocol to that (the Anglo-Polish) Treaty, a protocol which I have seen with my own eyes' There *was* then an unpublished clause. His next words were rather unexpected. 'That protocol,' the Major continued, 'if I read it correctly, and I believe I did, further reinforce the obligations of *His Majesty's Government to the Polish nation.*' This and, no doubt, words spoken by Captain Alan Graham were too much for *The Times* On the following day it complained, in the querulous manner so peculiarly its own, about a 'widely prevalent misunderstanding about the guarantee given to Poland in 1939.' 'This guarantee,' it continued, brushing aside what Major Petherick had revealed on the previous day, 'was directed exclusively to the contingency of aggression by Germany.' The assertion was not allowed to pass unchallenged. On the 20th, *The Times* carried a letter from the Polish

Ambassador which said: 'You . . . dwell on what you call the limitation of the British guarantee—to operate against Germany only—and alleged a number of reasons for such a limitation Without entering fully into this delicate matter, *I must confess my inability to accept the version given in your columns*'

"What conclusion was one to draw from the official reply of 19th October, 1939, Major Petherick's revelation, the objection of the Polish Ambassador, *and our Government's reluctance to publish the secret protocol*? It was surely —in spite of the gallant attempt of *The Times* to face, and out-stare the facts—that the Soviet was mentioned, perhaps by name, in the protocol, and that, while we did limit our commitments to Poland *vis-a-vis* Russia, we did not shed *all* our obligations and remained bound to support Poland should Stalin, in collaboration with Hitler, seize or demand Polish territory'

"The known facts did not allow of any other interpretation, and it was verified by the belated publication of the secret protocol. Yet the protocol did not see the light of day until Britain's Foreign Secretary had demonstrated that he had not found time to acquaint himself with his country's obligations. In the debate of 28th February, Major Petherick maintained that the decisions of the Crimean Conference were a violation of the Anglo-Polish Agreement-*cum*-protocol, and he quoted verbatim Clause 3 of the protocol with its explicit reference to 'the undertakings mentioned in Article 6 of the Agreement' When Mr. Eden came to answer, he stated that he had looked the matter up that day (a confession which, coming *after* Yalta, invited bitter comment), and that Clause 3 of the protocol did not refer to Article 6 of the Agreement but to Article 3. The Major was infinitely polite. 'I am extremely sorry,' he rejoined, 'but Clause 3 says "undertakings mentioned in Article 6" Nothing could be more specific' The Foreign Secretary begged the hon Gentleman's pardon, but insisted that he had taken the trouble to look the matter up that very day. Mr. Eden was, as it turned out, wrong, but his hearers could not yet be sure of that fact They were, however, given pointers. Twice he found it necessary to say that he had consulted his legal advisers and that, in their judgment, the protocol restricted the scope of the Agreement to German aggression—an assurance which could only have worried his audience more For the Agreement was a model of clarity and the protocol, framed at the same time, was presumably equally unequivocal. Why then the lawyers? Was their function to find a loophole of escape from obligations grown distasteful? Mr. Eden confirmed the rising suspicions. 'I am quite confident,' he began, realised that he was not confident at all, and switched to, 'or at least I am advised . . . by my legal advisers . .' All in all, it was a sorry exhibition.

"On the 5th April the protocol was published . . . It was learnt from it that the term 'European Power' was explicitly restricted to Germany . . The provision made for the contingency of Russia's physically attacking, or threatening the independence of, Poland—the pledge that Britain and Poland would then 'consult together *on the measures to be taken in common*' . . . Britain was faithful to this last promise when she used her good offices to bring about the Russo-Polish Pact of 1941, by which Russia gave up her claim to eastern Poland. The reader will realise the heinous betrayal of which this country's leaders were guilty when, at Yalta, they gave their blessing to the Russian aggression of 1939, 'consulting' with the Soviet and not Poland 'on the measures to be taken in common'—in order to make permanent the work of Ribbentrop and Molotov. A comparison of Clause 3 of the Protocol with Article 6 of the Agreement will bear out Major

Petherick's accusation, for the 'undertakings' entered into by Britain at Yalta prejudiced both the 'sovereignty' and the 'territorial inviolability' of Poland.

"If we can honestly find a loophole in our treaty terms, and if we are small enough to get through it, by all means let us take advantage of it; but would such a loophole relieve us of the duty of fulfilling our moral obligations?"

The British Foreign Secretary was to state most emphatically that the Poles would be happier and more prosperous when they had been deprived of the Eastern half of their country and had received slices of Germany in return. He lauded the proposed territorial acquirements of Poland at the cost of Germany and with a patent sophistry adopted 'the scrap of paper' philosophy regarding treaties, denouncing the old fashioned doctrine that, having given one's word it is customary to keep it. He remarked, "it is really completely unrealistic to begin this discussion at the Treaty of Riga. I admit that it is true—there is no question of it—that the Soviet Government ultimately accepted the Treaty of Riga. But nobody with a knowledge of Russia was content with that solution or indeed that we were content with that solution."

It was a statement which could find no confirmation in history—it is enough to quote one such authority as Joffe, the Chairman of the Russian Peace Delegation who said at the signing of the Treaty of Riga (in the preamble to which was inserted the phrase, "the final everlasting . . . honourable peace. . . .") ". . . . None of the peace treaties concluded by Russia and the Ukraine allows of preparations for a new war, because none of these treaties leaves any problem unresolved, nor do they resolve any problem on the basis of a simple *power ratio*, as has always been the case hitherto."

That the U S.S.R., ruling circles appeared perfectly satisfied with the Riga frontier, until the Second Great War broke out, can be judged by a quotation from the official Great Soviet Encyclopedia (*Bolshaya Sovietskaya Entsiklopedia*), Vol. 46, p. 247, which was issued in 1940:—

"The new Soviet-Polish frontier was much less beneficial to the White Poles than the frontier which the Soviet Government had proposed to Poland in April, 1920. It meant, in fact, that Soviet Russia had been victorious in the fight against those counter-revolutionary forces."

The outstanding anomaly of Eden's argument was his reference to the existence of the orthodox Church problem in Eastern Galicia. Owing to there being no Orthodox Church in this region however, there was in fact no such problem. A complete tolerance for all religious denominations always existed in ancient Poland. During the lifetime of the new Poland (1918-1939), the Orthodox White Ruthenians, (there were no Orthodox Ukrainians), and the handful of Anti-Soviet Russians had no cause for complaint in relation to their religious freedom With regard to the Orthodox Church, it is necessary to recall that the Polish Orthodox

clergy were liquidated by the N K.V D. following the Soviet occupation of Eastern Poland in 1939.

The statements on the Crimean Conference issued by the two Bishops of the Polish Orthodox Church, Bishop Sava of Grodno, and Bishop Mateusz of Wilno, who were fortunate in being able to escape, are enlightening enough in themselves ·

" In 1939, guided by Christian morality, we condemned in our pastoral letters to the faithful the aggression of the Hitlerite forces . . So now we condemn the imposed activities of alien elements in Poland supported by a foreign Power. Even more do we condemn the international attempts to legalise this state of affairs We declare that we, orthodox citizens of Poland, remain faithful to the Polish State, which has been fighting the German invader since 1939, and to its constitutional Government sitting for the time being in London We raise our voices to advocate respect for Christian principles, rights and morals in international life "

The underlying suggestion of the existence of a non-existent problem in Eden's arguments was made apparently to support his inference that there was only a small proportion of Poles in Poland's Eastern provinces (" no more than one third "), and that the remaining population were anxious to be incorporated into the Soviet Union.

" For three whole days of last week, Members of the House of Commons strove, some in forthright speech, but many more inarticulately, to reconcile their troubled consciences with their political duties, which for the most part they interpret as the support and retention in office of Mr Churchill's Coalition Government," wrote Alastair Forbes in *Daily Mail.* " Not since Munich has the House seen such heart-searching, nor such cross-currents of easy optimism and saddened pessimism "

The speakers in this Debate which was to last for three days, were divided into two factions—those who upheld the principles at issue, and those who faced up to the consequences of the grim reality created by Russia's aggressive policy and admitted the facts While Churchill did his best to defend the decisions on the grounds of justice, his supporters in the House abandoned this line and spoke of the Crimean agreement on the Polish question as an agreement of power politics, as to a concession which was necessary, though deplorable. For in order to secure ' unity ' between the Big Three for a victory in Europe and for the establishment of world peace, the burial of the Polish Republic was inevitable The entire fabric of this reasoning was based on Russia's good-will, therefore the supporters of the Prime Minister clung desperately to their belief in this sincerity and good-will of Marshal Stalin's They endeavoured to convince themselves that he would carry out in detail the paragraphs in the Crimean Agreement regarding Poland, and thereby redeem the honour of Britain

The supporters of the Government in the Debate did not wish to see beyond the pressing need of the moment, for it was too much of a calamity. They, and the masses of the British people as well, were convinced by the

horror camps of Buchenwald and Belsen as to how far a totalitarian uncontrolled regime was able to go in its cruelty, but they did not wish to realise that none of these parliamentary men would have been allowed to visit Poland and relate how N.K.V.D. had transformed that country into one vast prison camp. The speakers in the Debate found it easy to assert their opinion that since Poland was to be 'free and independent' she would not have to bear the burden of the totalitarian Russian rule. At that time, however, when the Big Three were in the act of signing the Declaration in Yalta and when some of the Honourable Members of Parliament in Westminster, following the lead of their Prime Minister, were expressing their conviction that a new democratic government would arise in Poland, the agents of the N.K.V.D. were shooting the population of the Polish towns and villages, just as the Gestapo had been shooting them a few weeks earlier, and under the same accusation—as English spies and collaborators. The Polish press in Britain and the United States gave an almost daily report of the numbers of these victims and the localities—but it was only the Polish press.

This time the Soviet Embassy considered Russia's position to be so sure that they made no attempt to silence these voices. One report, did however, manage to pierce the artificial crust of indifference amongst the British. The news was given during the Debate that the wife of the Polish Prime Minister, Mme. Arciszewska, sixty years of age, working in the Red Cross in Warsaw had been arbitrarily taken under arrest by the Soviet police. The bitter icy eastern wind of reality lifted the drop-curtain for one moment and England caught a glimpse of the enormous difficulty of co-operation between Russia and the Western World. . . . An embarrassed British Government promptly intervened in Moscow, and shortly afterwards the Soviets released the arrested woman.

The incident of the arrest itself, the grounds on which Moscow acceded to London's request, and the silence of the British press over the most significant aspect of the case could not contribute towards convincing the sceptics of the dawn of a new era in Russo-Polish relations. The incident confirmed two things: firstly that the Soviet Government did not recognise any principle of legality and secondly, that the 'Lublin Committee' was immediately executing orders emanating from Moscow. It was difficult to find in this affair any trace of esteem for the principle of democracy which Moscow and Lublin professed to champion. In any case, Madame Arciszewska even then was not a free agent for she was ordered to report daily to the police station.

The panic sown among wealthy and poor alike by the Soviets in the Middle Zone was to become an obsession in Germany and its waves were to reach the shores of the British Isles. Every Member of Parliament fully understood what Churchill found it impossible to state publicly—

at the Crimea the choice had lain before the two Democracies—war or peace! Either they had to accept the demands of Russia in relation to Poland and Yugoslavia, to the line traced from the Bornholm Island—to Trieste, or take the first step which would lead to a state of war between Russia and the Western World. The Prime Minister with his grave warnings, his call for discipline and belief in his leadership—his appeal to dismiss sentiment for hard reason was to deepen that feeling of fear of Russia in the British Parliament The ears were deaf to the voices of despair arising from that part of Europe where the Soviets had re-placed the Germans, and where their army, partially equipped by the Atlantic Democracies for the sole object of fighting 'aggression' were now in former German billets. The general tone of the Debate was an unfounded optimism on the part of the British Government, but a group of twenty-seven Members revolted against the instructions of the Whips and put forward an Amendment on the Polish affair regretting the decision to transfer Polish territory to Russia and the denial of the rights of the Polish people to establish their own free government.

The House rejected the Amendment by 395 votes. The 27 Members who supported it were as follows:—Major Petherick, Mr. Keeling, Commdr. R. R. Bower, (Cleveland), Squadron-Leader P. W. Donner, Captain A C. Graham (Wirral), Mr. W. P. C. Greene (Worcester), Mr. A. Hopkinson, Sir E. Graham-Littel (London Univ.) Major E. G. R. Lloyd (Renfrew, E.), Mr. J. McGovern, Sir J S P. Mellor, Mr. J. P. Morris (Salford, N.), Mr. W. Nunn, Major B A. J. Peto, Mr. H. V. A. M. Raikes, Professor D. L. Savory, Col. Sir J. J. Shute, Commdr. Sir A. R. J. Southby, Mr. C. Stephen, Mr. R. R. Stokes, Hon. J. J. Stourton, Vice-Adm. E. A. Taylor (P'd'ton S.), Flight-Lieut. W. Teeling, Col. C. N Thornton-Kemsley, Sir W. A. Wayland, Sir H. G Williams (Croydon, S), Major Lord Willoughby de Eresby.

On March 1, 1945, the House of Commons, by 413 'Ayes' against nil (although a number expressed their dissatisfaction by absenting themselves), and the House of Lords *nem dis;* passed the motion tabled by the Government approving the Crimean Declaration and supporting the Government's policy. The British Parliament were obviously admitting that Poland was lost and, as far as they were concerned, there was no desire or willingness to fulfil England's pledges. Their support of the Government was an acknowledgment of their responsibility, although hardly any of the speakers made any attempt to pretend that what was being done was right and just. Peace—peace, at any price for the English people whatever the cost in blood and tears of the other nations, for the price of slavery and death of thirty-five million Poles, and one hundred million of the inhabitants of the Middle Zone, who according to the Soviet slogans " will blossom into a new life in the sunshine of Stalin's constitution ".

* * *

The Foreign policy of Britain under Churchill had been to give support and provide war material to anyone who was willing to " fight the Hun." But unfortunately one of the members of the Alliance who had duly received this support began to employ the same methods as the Germans in order to achieve the same goal Churchill's Government found itself up against a blank wall. From that moment, its foreign policy became, at the same time, vague and involved, it was a policy where every effort was made to assist the aggrandisement of the Soviet Union and to subvert every attempt on the part of her victims to save themselves In the earlier stages of the Great Alliance, when it was still uncertain as to when and how the war would end and the hypothesis had to be taken into account that Germany would survive as a Power, the theory of a common German-Russian frontier, so useful for Britain in the maintenance of the Balance of Power in Europe could be admitted In 1944, however, after the successful invasion, the end of Germany was in sight—and her annihilation as a military factor. And yet in spite of this, Churchill's policy unshaken, stubbornly followed the path of complete appeasement. It would seem futile to explain the problem by a series of simple slogans and formulae forced to the surface of life in this era, such as ' peace at any price,' ' world co-operation ' and so forth Heretofore any nation endangered by a more powerful neighbour always held the belief that somewhere north or south, west or east, somewhere behind the horizon there was a friendly nation from whom they might expect succour. After Versaille, the peoples of the Middle Zone had turned to France and Britain. And when at the end of the Second Great War this Britain was bending before Russia and seeking in her turn for support, it meant that she for some reason felt herself weak. Materially she was extremely strong, but it grew more and more apparent that her leading class had lost the desire of expansion and faith in England's traditions, her destiny and—her will to fight The frontiers of the British Empire were well defined and there was only one thought—to keep them untouched. Britain had entered the phase of her life when she was prepared to fight only in the event of being attacked. According to the Soviet theoriticians this was the most characteristic symptom of her decay—(a theory they applied to Western Civilisation generally), at any rate it certainly seemed a sign of stagnation.

Britain had plans for herself but not for the world and she seemed unwilling to cope with the great problems, the solution to which was made so urgent by technical progress The tree whose growth has been arrested will rot sooner or later—British political thought had become confused, and the boldest even among her representatives dare not say —we must fight over Europe to save humanity and we must take over the responsibility of leadership. They were concerned with the future of their people only—to provide each family with a house and each citizen with a pension—and that was all The external danger of Europe in

Russian hands was dismissed by the belief that the Soviets would stay where they were after the German defeat and that a lasting peace would be secured on this line thus dividing the two worlds.

The settlement of the Polish question by an agreement with the Russian annexation of that country, though distasteful to the majority of the House, was accepted under the pretext of discipline and confidence in their leader.

" The English Government," wrote Thomas Jefferson many years ago, " presents the singular phenomenon of a nation, the individuals of which are as faithful to their private engagements and duties, as honourable as worthy, as those of any nation on earth, and whose government is yet the most unprincipled at this day known."

" The word of an Englishman," wrote a leading Polish paper in America, " has lost the value it has possessed through the ages And by this fact Western civilisation has lost one of its greatest assets, for the English word was a synonym of truth and faithfulness Since this word had been broken in the case of a nation who had sacrificed everything in order to keep its word, it became difficult—even impossible—for that wronged Polish nation to any longer have an esteem for the British guarantee

" The United States had withdrawn from their principles, from the solemn promises given in the Atlantic Charter to the whole world, while Britain had torn up her Treaty."

" There was a general sense of bowing to the inevitable . . . " wrote *The Tablet* on the atmosphere in the two Houses of Parliament on March 1, " a kind of helplessness, as if the imposition on a Poland of, at the best, the standardised technical culture of the modern age, calculated to drown within a few generations all that centuries have made distinctively Polish, was something inevitable, against which it would be mere sentimentalism to protest, and as even the imposition of that alien Marxist regime which the Poles have well-founded reason to fear, would be so largely the result of irresistible trends that objection would be a quixotic folly."

There was also the apparent conviction in the House that the result obtained in the Crimea was all that could possibly be obtained in that hour when the armies of Muscovy were sweeping over the ruins of the great Fascist Empire

The Members of Parliament who cast their vote in approval of Churchill's policy in the Crimea were the same men from whom Chamberlain had collected 366 votes (Labour voted 144 against) in support of his deal at Munich. No Conservative had dared to vote against his handing over of, as Lloyd George commented,"a little democratic state to a ruthless dictator who will deny freedom to both Czechs and Germans." Among those who abstained from voting in that crisis had been Churchill and Eden. This time there was no one with the courage of the late Lloyd George who would speak out and similarly denounce the new dictator. Duff-Cooper, the First Lord of the Admiralty in Chamberlain's Government had resigned, as he could not ' swallow ' the language of appeasement applied by his Prime Minister to Hitler. In 1945, Harry Straus, Parliamentary Secretary to the Ministry of Planning, found that

a similar line of reasoning ' stuck in his throat.' He wrote a short letter to the Prime Minister tendering his resignation :

"After carefully considering all that you and Anthony Eden had said, I found it impossible to approve of the treatment of the Polish people by the Crimea Conference, and therefore abstained in the Division . . . holding the convictions that I hold, I could not honestly take a different course."

It was the first time that the word ' honesty ' had been used by a member of His Majesty's Government during the spate of speeches over this Crimean affair. Michael Foot in the *Daily Herald* contemptuously expressed the chasm which lay between England's word and her deed.

" . If words could bestow freedom on a nation, Poland might now count herself as free as the mountain winds.

" Never were a people's rights so barricaded with rhetoric and deeply defended with guarantees and assurances.

" The Three Great Powers have reiterated their support for her sovereign independence A veritable Chinese Wall has been erected to safeguard her liberty from invasion. The last crevices have been cemented by Churchillian oratory and the British House of Commons had pronounced the whole edifice well and truly founded.

"Are there any doubters ? . . "

IN THE SOVIET BURIAL GROUND . . .

No right anywhere exists to hand peoples about from sovereignty to sovereignty as if they were property.

(President Woodrow Wilson, referring to Poland in the Senate on January 22, 1917).

The outcome of the Yalta Agreement was sad in the extreme. Having driven his hard bargain, Stalin almost simultaneously repudiated the terms by placing an interpretation on them which rendered the effort of the Allied leaders meaningless. He sabotaged the work of the Commission of Three appointed at Yalta to compose a new Polish Provisional Government, and persistently upheld his 'Lublin Committee.' On April 21, Moscow concluded an agreement with it analogous to that with Dr. Benes, thereby reducing Poland to a state of Soviet vassalhood The country was virtually isolated. Hoisting the Polish flag, the N.K V.D. continued its ' cleaning-up ' process and was able in a short space of time to achieve what the Germans had not been capable of accomplishing during their five and a half years occupation of Poland, namely, to dig out and destroy the top layer of Polish Underground leaders. These leaders had been indirectly approached by the ' Lublin Committee,' and on March 10 by the Soviets, with proposals to discuss the problem of co-operation. The latter's invitation was addressed " to the Government's Delegate." The Underground had turned down any question of parleys with the former body, but with the consent of the Polish Government in London had agreed to accept the Russian invitation. The names of the Polish representatives were transmitted by the British and American

Governments to Moscow. The Poles were invited to commence their talks with a Marshal Zshukov, the Commander of the First White Russian front, who was to act as the Soviet's representative. The aim of these parleys was defined in a letter from the Russians to the Polish Vice-Premier Jankowski and to General Okulicki, Commander of the now disbanded Home Army, in order to " cleanse the atmosphere and to facilitate the emergence of the parties from the Underground and to merge them with other democratic forces in an independent Poland." Colonel Pimenov of the N.K.V.D., who acted as an intermediary, assured the Polish leaders of safe conduct, giving his word of honour on behalf of his superiors. At the first meeting on March 17 between he and the Government's Delegate, Jankowski, the latter stated that restoration of normal conditions in Poland depended entirely upon the Soviets and asked for an authoritative explanation before he commenced the parleys, as to the existence of the ' Lublin Government,' and the position held by the Commander of the First White Russian front, also as to ' why the Soviets had sent an officer of low rank ' as the Commander-in-Chief's representative to conduct these talks. Furthermore, he wished to be informed as to whether Marshal Zshukov was acting with the knowledge of the Allied Commission in Moscow, or only on behalf of Molotov, the Commissar of Foreign Affairs. At the same time Jankowski asked that facilities be granted him to contact his Government in London personally. On March 18, Colonel Pimenov conferred with the leaders of the Polish Peasants' Party and with the National Democratic and Labour Party two days later. During this second talk, he categorically stated that the Lublin Government would have to obey the orders and decisions of the Commander of the First White Russian front, in whom was invested complete powers of negotiation.

On March 20, Vice-Premier Jankowski received an answer from Marshal Zshukov that he would be coming to negotiate with the Underground, and that he was authorised to do so by the Headquarters of the Red Army with the agreement of Marshal Stalin He added that he was eager to settle the affair as soon as possible. A plane capable of carrying twenty persons was to be placed at the disposal of the Poles on March 27.

All these pourparleys, however, were simply a trap. When the members of the Home Cabinet and ten leaders of various political parties, including General Okulicki and interpreter, arrived at the appointed meeting place at Pruszkov, a suburb of Warsaw on March 27 and 28, they disappeared . . . They were conveyed by plane to Moscow and shut in the Lubianka prison . . .

The kidnapped men were :—Jan Jankowski, Deputy Premier and Government Delegate in Poland. He had been appointed as Under Secretary of State and Minister of Labour several times, and was a representative of the Labour Party. His predecessor, Dr. Jan Piekalkiewicz, of the Polish Peasant Party, was arrested by the Germans in 1943, and killed in prison.

Antoni Pajdak, member of the Cabinet and the Polish Socialist Party, Deputy Lord Mayor of Cracow before the war.

Adam Bien, member of the Cabinet and the Peasant Party.

Stanislaw Jasiukovicz, member of the Cabinet and the Polish National Democratic Party,

Kazimierz Puzak, Chairman of the Council of National Unity (Underground Parliament). From 1921 onwards, he had been the Secretary of the Polish Socialist Party and M P. During the reign of the Tsar, in 1910, he was sentenced to death, but this was changed to a sentence of eight years' imprisonment in the Schluselburg fortress, from where he was released by the revolution of 1917 Puzak was one of the most important creators of the Polish Underground

Kazimierz Baginski, M P., one of the chief leaders of the Peasant Party and its Secretary from 1932.

Stanislaw Mierzwa, a member of the Executive Committee of the Peasant Party.

Josef Chacinski, M P., Chairman of the Christian Democratic Club in Parliament and Secretary of the Christian Trade Unions

Urbanski, M.P , Chairman of the Christian Trade Union from 1921

Zygmunt Stypulkowski, M P , barrister and representative of the National Democratic Party.

Kazimierz Kobylanski, National Democratic Party, and journalist.

Piotr Czernik and Michalowski, both members of the Democratic Party.

Leopold Okulicki, Brigadier-General and Commander of the disbanded Home Army. After the siege of Warsaw in September, 1939, he remained in Poland and in January, 1941, as the Commandant of a district, he was arrested by the Soviet authorities and deported to Russia. After the Russo-Polish Treaty of 1941, he was appointed Chief-of-Staff of General Anders' Army. In May, 1944, he was dropped by parachute into Poland and fought in Warsaw as General Bor's Chief-of-Staff

The British and American Governments, informed by the Polish Government of these arrests, reacted strongly, pointing out that some of these men had been earmarked by the Western Powers as members of the future broadened Polish Government, but the Kremlin ignored all requests for information. On May 2, the British Minister of State, Richard K Law, informed the Commons that the Foreign Secretary had still been unable to extract from Molotov " any hint of the fate of the fourteen Polish leaders."

In the meantime, as the British Press observed with disappointment, " approaches have been made by Russia to representative Poles, both in London and Poland for their assistance. This had not been with the official knowledge of either Britain or America." However, the ' approaches ' towards the arrested leaders did not seem to have given the desired result, and under the barrage of World Press, Molotov, six weeks later on May 5, casually disclosed to Eden and Stettinius at the Conference in San Francisco that these men had been arrested on the charge of " diversionist activities against the Red Army." Molotov, with particular emphasis, stressed the arrest of General Okulicki. London and Washington indignantly issued strongly worded statements :—

" Mr. Eden and Mr. Stettinius," ran the British Statement, " immedi-

ately expressed their grave concern to Mr. Molotov at receiving this most disquieting information after so long delay and asked him to obtain a full explanation concerning the arrest of these Polish leaders, a complete list of names and news of their present whereabouts.

" The Foreign Secretary has reported this most serious development to His Majesty's Government and has informed Mr. Molotov that meanwhile he cannot continue discussions on the Polish issue."

The American Government ended its Statement with the words :— " Further discussions must await a reply."

This break-down in the discussions of the Polish problem fitted in well with the Soviet's plans, which were, it seemed, nothing less than an endeavour to settle the whole question without the participation of the other two Powers A fortnight later, on May 19, Marshal Stalin, through *The Times*' correspondent, explained his attitude, stating that the arrest of the Polish political leaders was in no way connected with the formation of a Polish Provisional Government. " These gentlemen," he wrote, " were arrested on the basis of the law for safe-guarding the rear of the Red Army from diversionists . . . The arrest was made by the Soviet military authorities in accordance with the agreement which was concluded between the Polish Provisional Government and the Soviet military command . . . It was not true," Marshal Stalin continued, " that they had been invited for the purpose of negotiations with the Soviet authorities." He maintained that the Lublin Committee must be recognised as the kernel of the future Polish Government. This, he stated, would be analogous with the position in Jugoslavia, and stipulated that this future Government must not carry out a policy of a *cordon sanitaire* directed against the Soviet Union.

Stalin's technique was simple—he merely repeated his story over and over again until the war-weary Anglo-Saxon Governments were ready to convince themselves that this arrest of men who were under safe conduct was not a crime after all.

It was the Russians' final assault on the Allies in order to destroy the last vestiges of Poland's independence—to eliminate the Polish Government and the Polish Army abroad as factors in the international arena. That the ' Lublin Committee ' was unable to cope with its new authority was immaterial to Moscow, since the utter chaos then existing in Poland helped in the process of grinding down any resistance among the population The existence of Poland abroad, however, was still a considerable menace. Over one million Poles, deportees and prisoners-of-war were located in Western Germany now under Anglo-American occupation, apart from the number in France and Britain. Ninety-nine per cent. of those in Germany, as the Allies found to their astonishment—the information was reported from an official source—did not wish to go back to their country now under Russian rule. And when the Stalags began to empty and foreign nationals were leaving Germany, the Poles

remained in their camps, the majority of them still behind barbed wire under guards.

The last act of the Russian scheme to break Poland was staged in two parts :—The first was the challenge thrown down by Moscow to the Allies—the destruction of part of the Polish Government (whom they had kidnapped from Poland) by means of a trial staged by them. Secondly, the Kremlin's resolution to form a pro-Russian Polish Government by adding a few collaborationists of the Quisling type to their already existing Lublin Committee and forcing the Allied Governments to recognise this body. Moscow's political trials have become famous—at them were undertaken the liquidation of old friends or rivals, all opposition and foreigners who were working in the U.S.S.R. The accused were normally charged with State treason, sabotage and espionage. The first of such trials in Moscow took place in 1933, when the Socialist Revolutionaries found themselves in dock as the rivals of the Bolsheviks This trial, however, did maintain some semblance at any rate, to a court normal to Western Europe. Liebknecht and Vanderveld attended, in the capacity of barristers, but resigned during its course stating they had no possibility of defending the accused The eminent German Social Democrat, Karl Kautsky, commented :—

" This new Russian despotism, not of the Tsarists but of Bonaparte's, wishes to make the socialists of the whole world partners to its policy of persecution . . The desire of the Bolsheviks is that the socialists of the whole world support the persecution of the Socialist Revolutionists and the Mienshevíks which they have started. The Bolsheviks wish to present their policy as the most literal application of marxism, as the truthful execution of the principles of class warfaie. But it is impossible to agree with these principles, resulting only in the barbarian persecutions and oppression which the Bolsheviks are applying to those workers who are considering socialism from another point of view. The Moscow trial is a desperate attempt on the part of the Bolsheviks to humiliate in the eyes of the world their most dangerous of opponents by presenting them as the partners of a counter-revolutionary movement . . . "

The trials in Soviet Russia differed from any other in the world, even from the German Justizmurder, in that, the accused adopted a suicidal attitude, heaping charges upon charges against themselves, acting as the most ruthless of prosecutors, confessing to every crime they could possibly invent. For instance, at the so-called Trotskyites' trial, the former friends of Lenin, Zinoviev, Piatakov, Bukharin and the rest, confessed that they were the agents of the Capitalists, Fascists, Hitlerites and so on. This extraordinary behaviour on the part of the accused was explained by the World Press in a manner far from flattering to Soviet judicature. There were reports of the special treatment accorded to the arrested men. But in the majority of cases the desired results were apparently obtained by a far more simple method. It came as the direct outcome of the Soviet's practice of holding the family of the accused responsible for his activities. The prisoners who faced Vyshynsky or any other prosecutor, at these

' staged ' trials, were completely aware that no power in the world would be able to save their lives—but, the life of their family could still be bought at the price of ' confession ' and there was no price too high for a man who knew he was already dead. If such strange behaviour on the part of the accused amazed the onlookers at the first of these trials, the same technique repeated at the succeeding ones no longer surprised them. The accused merely repeated what he had been ordered, aware that it was immaterial to the judges and the court, for the verdict was already pre-destined. It would be as well to point out here that, although foreign correspondents were permitted to attend these trials, only the censored version issued by the Soviet Information Bureau was allowed to appear abroad.

The trial of June 18, 21, 1945, in Moscow, was remarkable for the fact that for the first time there stood in the dock under the charge of anti-Soviet activities, the legal governing body of a foreign country, a country not at war with Russia, on the contrary, one whose forces were helping the advancing Red Army. The Soviet authorities stated that on the grounds of their agreement with the ' Lublin Committee ' they had the right to try these men This explanation was the more extraordinary since, on April 24, therefore a month after the arrest of the Polish leaders, Osubka, the Chairman of the ' Lublin Committee,' had stated at a Press conference in Moscow that he knew nothing whatsoever about the arrests of these men and in fact that " the whole story was fictitious and had been invented by the London Poles in order to discredit the Lublin Committee."

The main accusation was levelled at General Okulicki, in an attempt to present the arrested men as a body acting against the Red Army. He and the Vice-Premier, Jan Jankowski, together with the three Ministers, Antoni Pajdak, Adam Bien and Stanislaw Jasiukowicz, and the Chairman of the Council of National Unity, Kazimierz Puzak, were charged with being the organisers and leaders of the Polish Underground in the rear of the Red Army in Eastern Poland (annexed by the U.S S R.) and in the Western half of Poland, since " they acted according to the instructions received from the so-called Polish emigré Government in London." They were alleged to have organised and conducted a vicious action directed against the Red Army and the Soviet Union, by terrorist attempts against the officers and privates of that Army and by raids carried out by armed troops ; also of having conducted propaganda hostile to the Soviet Union and the Red Army, and of co-operation with Germany. Okulicki was in addition accused of espionage on behalf of . . . The name of the Power was not mentioned, but the word London was repeated again and again throughout the proceedings. The remaining accused men were charged with having participated in the Underground organisation and of not informing the Soviet military authorities of the failure of the Underground leaders to execute the orders of the Red Army and hand over radio sets, printing machines, arms and ammunition.

All accusations were based on Article 58 of the Soviet code, the penalty for which is death . . . The Prosecutor charged the accused with only having dissolved the Home Army officially, and of having retained that Army in the organisation known as *Niepodległość* (Independence) or in short *Nie* (No !)

Thus in Moscow's dock stood the leaders of the greatest resistance movement created in Europe under German occupation, the only underground, in fact, which had led an uncompromising fight against the aggressor for five and a half years and at the end of that time had been able in the final stages of the war to produce over twenty fighting divisions. The trial was not only against Poland but against England's endeavour to maintain some influence in Europe east of Germany. The Poles were in dock because they had, and wanted to have, contact with Britain and had received her support.

A number of unknown people were produced by the prosecutor as witnesses. These people presented themselves as members of the Polish Underground and gave damning evidence against the defendants. For instance, a certain Jansen declared that, from January, 1944, to January 1945, he had been receiving money from General Bór to be used in hostile activities against the Soviet Union, yet from October, 1944, Bór was a prisoner-of-war in German hands. Each defendant by turn (according to the Russian statements) acknowledged that his activities in the form of hostile propaganda had been directed against the Soviet Union, but denied any military action against the Red Army By some omission of censorship, the world was able to learn that General Okulicki had called six witnesses to be brought forward in his defence. When asked where these people were, he had answered ' in the Soviet prisons.' It seems the court would not agree to call any of these people, as three of them could not be found, while the fourth was unable to reach the court in time as the " flying weather was too bad " The remaining two witnesses the court ruled out as irreleyant to the case.

According to the Soviets, 594 officers and privates of the Red Army had been killed and 249 wounded, supposedly as a result of the action of the Polish Underground. The verdict of guilty was brought in and to the general astonishment the accused received a sentence of imprisonment only—General Okulicki to ten years, Vice-Premier Jankowski eight years, Minister Bien and the others received shorter terms of imprisonment, some were even released.

The radio of the ' Lublin Government ' commented on this sentence :—

" It has been testified in this trial of the sixteen men in Moscow that the reactionaries were endeavouring to form a bloc with the Germans and wanted to return to Beck's policy We, the Polish people, are condemning these crimes. The Soviet prosecutor did not take into consideration that these men were acting, not only against the Red Army, but against the Polish people and their interests as well. They tried to involve Poland in a

conflict with the Soviet Union and for this they must answer before a tribunal of the Polish people."

The trial did not explain why the Russian Government had not immediately informed the British and American Governments regarding these so-called ' crimes ' of the Polish leaders, nor why the Chairman of the ' Lublin Committee ' had continued to deny the arrest of these men a month after it had occurred, neither why the accused had come forward voluntarily and with such willingness at the invitation of the Soviets, if, as the prosecutor said, they had led an armed campaign against Russia and collaborated with Germany. The accusation also included the point that General Okulicki had met the Soviet representatives with compromising documents on his person which proved that he was both acting against Russia and co-operating with the Germans.

In the face of all this it can only be assumed that the Soviets endeavoured to persuade these leaders of Poland to fall in with the Kremlin's plans but since they had proved adamant, intended to secretly and silently liquidate them. Owing, however, to the stir caused by the Polish Government regarding the disappearance of their colleagues and the out-cry in the World Press, Moscow decided to stage one more political trial. There were discrepances in this performance . . . for instance, Molotov had declared at San Francisco that about 100 soldiers had been victims of this criminal action on the part of the Polish Underground, but, according to the accusation, this number was 594. It also seemed remarkable that all the enumerated attempts took place exclusively eastward of the ' Curzon Line.' This could only be taken to mean, therefore, that, while the Poles west of this ' Line ' still anticipated settling their argument with Russia peacefully, the Poles east of this ' Line,' on territory which had been annexed by the Soviets, were fighting or rather defending themselves, against the occupying forces.

The next extraordinary statement of the prosecutor was that the Poles had co-operated with Germany. The latter country was never known to boast of having had any Polish collaborators and it would be difficult to visualise a section of the Polish people co-operating with a country at a time when it was virtually beaten.

In the documents of the Polish Underground seized by the Russian police and quoted by the prosecutor, the word ' Russia ' in every instruction issued by the Polish Government in London was substituted for ' Germany ' and the Russian prosecutor was accordingly able to state that co-operation with the Germans had been planned by General Okulicki during the Warsaw rising.

The Soviets were anxious to hurry the whole affair through. They instituted the trial of these leaders of Poland, and sentenced them before even the German war criminals—Goering or Frank or the others who, for five years, had tortured the Polish people and who were responsible for the death of millions, found themselves in the dock. The Soviet's

speed in bringing these people to trial was the last touch to the final act of the Polish tragedy. It was the elimination of the last batch of the Polish leaders who were answering firmly *Nie* ! (No !) to the Russian and British demands for the recognition of Soviet sovereignty over Poland . . . Sikorski had perished in an air accident . . . He had claimed that there was a "limit beyond which no Pole can go." Among those leaders of the different nations whose Governments had benefitted from British hospitality during the war, he had been one of the foremost personalities, and there was no room for a politician of such status and with such an outlook in a Russianized Europe . . .

Sosnkowski, an even more important figure for the Polish people than Sikorski, was evicted from his place by diplomatic pressure combined with a scurrilous press propaganda which was brought to such a pitch that for some time at least, it seemed as if the problem of Russo-British unity entirely depended upon how quickly Sosnkowski was removed from office. Therefore the Polish Commander-in-Chief gave up his post . . . His successor, Bór-Komorowski, then fighting a desperate battle in Warsaw against the might of Germany, was immediately proclaimed by Moscow as a traitor of Poland . . .

President Raczkiewicz and all the ministers of Sikorski, Mikolajczyk and Arciszewski's Cabinet were treated by Moscow as a gang of Hitler's collaborators from the moment of the severance of Russo-Polish diplomatic relations The road of understanding with the U.S.S.R , and an eventual return to Poland, was barred to them. Several of the Ministers from the pre-war Polish Government, found by the N.K.V.D., in Rumania had been taken from their internment camp and locked in the Russian prisons to await their trial by some future Soviet-Polish puppet government as being guilty of Poland's defeat in 1939. Eminent politicians in Poland had been taken under Soviet arrest in the wholesale round-ups. And when the last, and most important members of the legal Polish Government—its Home Cabinet, were eliminated by imprisonment, the final disturbing element was removed, and the Soviets, with their 'Lublin Committee' in Poland, felt strong enough to wait for what the future was to bring forth.

To the Big Three, the heart of the Polish problem lay in the difficulty of building the new Polish Government which had been provided for in the Yalta Agreement. While Russia intended using the 'Lublin Committee' as the main body, merely adding a few unimportant personalities to it, Britain and America wanted to dismiss this body altogether and build up from the bottom. Between the two existed a vast chasm which would have to be bridged before a solution could be found. The next move was made by American diplomacy, which, from the start of the war with Japan, had endeavoured to gain Russian participation, although, as far as Russia was concerned, it was indeed hardly in her interests to

shorten this war. Truman succeeded Roosevelt and the Teheran concessions were succeeded by others. Questioned at a Press Conference on June 13, the new President stated that America had not changed its attitude regarding Poland, but the Russians certainly had . . . At that time Truman's special envoys were acting in Moscow and London and, as a result of their negotiations, Stalin agreed to renew the work of the Commission of Three in Moscow, the price being Washington's connivance with Moscow's action against the Polish Government. The invitations were sent by the American and British Governments to certain persons in Poland Two well-known names were mentioned—Bishop Sapieha of Cracow and Witos, the leader of the Peasant Party. They both, however, refused to participate, although the latter's name was used afterwards on every occasion by Soviet propaganda, accompanied by the explanation that he was too ill to take an active part in politics.

On July 13, Churchill stated in the House that, apart from the aforementioned persons, invitations had been sent to Mikolajczyk and 'others' to participate in the Moscow conference with the Commission of Three, in order to discuss whether or not the Lublin Government should be broadened. It meant that Britain and America were agreeing to further conversations despite the fact that the fate of those fourteen Polish leaders was still unknown. It was therefore a tacit acknowledgement of Russia's intentions that the future Polish Government was not to be a new one, but merely a broadened 'Lublin Committee,' although, from the statements of the American and British politicians, it was obvious that they still held the view that this Government was to be established by a Commission of Three.

Moscow had played her cards perfectly—Mikolajczyk was now, it seemed, effectively influenced—the trial of the Underground leaders was timed for June 18, in order to coincide with the commencement of the discussion with the delegates for the revision of the Polish Government. In the event of any resistance from Mikolajczyk, he could very easily be placed in the dock alongside his previous colleagues in the Government—already Lublin claimed that documents establishing his guilt had been discovered and reminded him that the leaders then on trial had not only been active during his time of office as Premier, but some of them were members of the Peasant Party as well.

The Commission of Three was brushed aside—Bierut raised the point that this affair of the future Government for Poland should be settled among the Poles themselves, and that further interference of foreign ambassadors would constitute a 'humiliation' to the national honour of the Poles. When Mikolajczyk, as a British nominee, had finally given in, betrayed his former colleagues in the Cabinet and in his Party and subordinated himself to the Russians, Bierut informed the Commission of Three that the Poles had achieved agreement between themselves and had formed the Polish Provisional Government. Thus London

and Washington were out-manoeuvred and, faced with the sudden collapse of Mikolajczyk, had willy-nilly to accept the *fait accompli* and express themselves agreeable to this solution. The entire story was a repetition, stage by stage, of the tactics by which the Kremlin had achieved the elimination of the Royal Government of Yugoslavia. Subasich was persuaded to enter Tito's Government, a move which in no way affected the latter's policy, and, under the pretext of there being as a result a united Yugoslavian Government, Great Britain had abandoned King Peter. In the case of Yugoslavia a lack of unity was certainly most marked in that composite State, and Tito had definite grounds on which to lay claim to a number of supporters to his flag. No such claim, however, could be forwarded by the 'Lublin Committee'—the attitude of those Poles liberated by the Anglo-American Forces in Germany proved which persons the Polish people regarded as the genuine representatives of their country.

Thus with the American and British Governments' recognition of the Comintern agents as representatives of the enslaved Polish nation, the necessary camouflage for one of the greatest blackmails in history was created The 'Lublin Committee' was preserved in its entirety. A few democrats worn down by one process or the other (men such as Kiernik and Wycech by sojourn in the Russian prison) into complete submission, were dragged into this Committee. Those few found themselves members of a large Cabinet in which the other three-quarters consisted of Comintern agents. Mikolajczyk before whom for the past year had been dangled the post of Premier, was appointed as one of the Vice-Premiers and Minister of Agriculture. The other democrats were respectively Minister of Labour, Health and Culture, offices which carried no possibility of any political influence—the holders of the two latter positions were already in the 'Lublin Government,' and Mikolajczyk now agreed to recognise them as 'representatives' of the Peasant Party.

The 'Lublin Committee,' in its new edition, did not include any Polish political party apart from a section of the Peasant Party, whose real leaders, except for the aged Wincenty Witos, were in the Soviet prisons. The Socialist Party, so important in Poland's political life, was represented by Comintern agents such as Osubka. Bierut, a Russian citizen, remained head of the State, and source of authority as the Chairman of the National Council to which some of the eminent citizens of Poland were to be 'invited' to join.

"The agreement to form a Polish Provisional Government in Moscow," commented *Dziennik Polski* in London, "has struck the greatest blow the Polish Democratic Movement has ever received. But this Movement will not break under it . . . The Tsarist persecutions during the three-fold partitions and the Gestapo during the German occupation could not break it. On the contrary, it developed and hardened in the Underground. An accusation has been directed, under the banner of independence and democracy, against the people and the traditional political currents operating

in Poland. Neither the Moscow verdict in the recent trial nor the Moscow agreement will break this movement. The Atlantic Democracies for their own purposes agreed with this status existing in Poland—a Government forced on the country from abroad. This Moscow agreement is a Russian victory to eliminate any West European and American influence from Central and Eastern Europe "

The new Government (termed by the Poles the ' Government of International Unity ') informed London and Washington of their full recognition of the Yalta decisions, and were duly recognised by those Governments. The Polish Government in London lost its diplomatic status in the countries of her Western Allies. Poland was openly abandoned, it was a formal acknowledgement of the existing situation. Already in May, Britain, who in Article 7 of the Anglo-Polish Treaty was under an obligation " not to conclude an armistice or treaty of peace except by mutual agreement," signed the surrender of Germany without informing Poland. On May 13, in his speech on the progress of the war, the British Prime Minister did not even mention her name, while General Eisenhower, the Commander-in-Chief of the Allied Forces in Europe, in his Order of the Day to mark the end of the war, also omitted any mention of the Polish Army.

On June 25, the Polish Government in London published a proclamation to its people :—

" 1. For some years the policy of submission, pursued by big and small nations, to the demands of Hitlerite Germany, led unavoidably to the war and enabled the Germans to prepare for it. Poland rejected the German suggestion of a common action against Russia and then opposing the German plans and aims, took arms to defend her integrity and independence.

" 2 When the war broke out Poland had had the guarantees of Great Britain and France These guarantees provided an immediate help of those Powers in case of the German aggression. Besides the British guarantee, according to Article 5 of the Protocol to the Agreement of Mutual Assistance between the United Kingdom and Poland of 25th August, 1939, anticipated that :

> " The Undertakings mentioned in Article 6 of the Agreement should they be entered into by one of the Contracting Parties with a third State would of necessity be so framed that their execution should at no time prejudice either the sovereignty or territorial inviolability of the other Contracting Party.

" 3. The Polish Nation took arms in the defence of her own freedom and that of the other nations. The Polish soldier, in September, 1939, saved the freedom of Europe and perhaps the freedom of the world. If Poland, in 1939, had capitulated without fight or what would be even worse, had become a satellite of Germany, the freedom of European peoples would be buried probably for many decades. Poland was defeated in an uneven fight against Germany, supported by the Soviet Union, and the Western Powers were not able to fulfil their obligation of an immediate attack on Germany.

" 4 The Polish Government states that Poland has fulfilled all her obligations. She did not capitulate and she did not try to conclude a separate peace with Germany and carried on a stubborn fight against them

both at home and on all other battle-fronts, helping thus considerably in the common victory.

"5. In spite of the unyielding attitude of the whole Polish Nation, enormous sacrifices and the great part taken in war-efforts, the three Great Powers at the Conference at Yalta took decisions threatening the territorial integrity of the Polish State and excluding the free will of the nation to decide their own fate, the form of their government and the relationship of the Polish State with other countries In the Declaration of 13th February, 1945, the Polish Government categorically protested against those decisions, declaring that they cannot bind the Polish Nation deprived of the right of the free expression of its people's opinion.

"6. Despite the protest made by the Polish Government and contrary to all principles of international law and to the Declaration solemnly signed by the United Nations, a Committee, composed of the Foreign Minister of a country that has annexed nearly half of the whole territory of Poland and the Ambassadors of Great Britain and the U S A., had been authorised to sanction a psuedo-government imposed on the Polish Nation which is at present under the occupation of an alien army and an alien political police. An agency, created by the annexing Power under the form of so-called "Provisional Polish Government," and, in fact, based on the Communist Party, being only but a negligible part of the Polish Society, is to be sanctioned by the United Nations and is to have the right of representing the Polish Nation

"7 In order to keep the appearance of a free expression of the Polish Nation, they brought to Moscow, besides the representatives of the Communist administration imposed on Poland, some Poles, who have no authority to represent the Polish Nation Simultaneously with the consultations on the formation of the 'Government of National Unity' there took place in Moscow, in violation of the elementary principles of justice and righteousness, an illegal trial of the treacherously arrested leaders of the Polish Underground Movement. As the leaders of the struggle of the Polish Nation against Germany and as representatives of the democratic parties, those men, together with the legal Polish Government in London, are representatives of the Polish Nation until such time as genuinely free elections are held. Such elections would be possible only after the withdrawal of the army of occupation and political police from the Polish territory and on the condition that all the political parties of the Polish Underground and all the Polish citizens who are temporarily abroad owing to war circumstances could take part in it.

"8. The only legal Polish Government, legally constituted by the President of the Polish Republic, universally recognised and independent, state hereby that the 'Provisional Polish Government of National Unity' is illegal and cannot be on her own will recognised by the Polish Nation. It was created on a basis without precedent, while the whole Polish territory was occupied by the Soviet troops and while the Poles were deprived of the essential rights of citizenship

"9 The Polish Government declares that it will hand over its authority solely to a government which has been formed on free Polish soil and one which reflects the will of the people as expressed in free elections."

The President of the Polish Republic in his proclamation announced that he would transfer his "inalienable and unalterable rights to his successor only when conditions in Poland permit the free expression of the national will."

The Commander-in-Chief of the Polish armed forces, General Bór-Komorowski, had stated that the President's proclamation remained binding for all Polish service men "as the orders of the supreme Commander of the Polish Forces"

On July 5, the Polish radio from London, the voice to which Poland had listened since 1940, gave out its last news. The voice of Poland who had entered the war in 1939 had been silenced . . . On the succeeding day, the British and American Governments issued similar statements welcoming the establishment of the 'Polish Provisional Government of National Unity' as an important step towards the fulfilment of the decisions regarding Poland embodied in the declaration on that country issued by the Crimean Conference.

The British Press hailed the solution of the 'thorniest problem' between the Atlantic Democracies and Russia and 'with confidence' was anticipating the forthcoming 'free and unfettered' elections in Poland.

Thus Poland was 'liberated,' and with the consent of the Atlantic Democracies this time, was shut within the Soviet burial-ground of nations. The Soviet totalitarian Government stepped into the place of the German National Social State . . Thus was sealed the fate of that zone between the Baltic and the Aegean Seas. The flags of Freedom and Democracy were hauled down . . Moscow hailed its greatest triumph . Germany was defeated and, with her, the Western World. Half Europe now lay at the feet of the Red Tsar . . .

The final Note of protest from the Polish Ambassadors' in London, Washington and Paris was handed out

Edward Raczynski, Polish Ambassador in London, forwarded the following Note on July 6 to Anthony Eden, Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs .

"In view of the recognition on July 6, 1945, by the British Government of the so-called Polish Provisional Government of National Unity, I have the honour to declare that I was accredited as Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary to the Court of St James's by the constitutional President and Government of the Polish Republic, who continue to be the sole constitutional and independent representatives of Poland

"Acting on the instructions of my Government, I have the honour to bring to your knowledge that

"1. The authority of the President and Government of Poland, to whom I owe allegiance, derives from the constitutional laws of the Polish Republic enacted by the nation through a freely elected Parliament which remain of unimpaired legal validity and which could not be changed in conditions of duress under which the nation exists to-day. Under this authority, the President and Government of Poland maintained normal diplomatic relations with the British Government and concluded with that Government a number of agreements, including the Agreement of Mutual Assistance of August 25, 1939, which I had the honour to sign in London on behalf of the Polish Government, as well as agreements between Poland

and other Powers, including all the bilateral undertakings entered into during the war and concerning military, naval, aviation, financial, economic and shipping matters, of which I would mention specifically .

(a) The Polish-French Protocol, signed at Paris on September 4, 1939, concerning the execution of the Polish-French Alliance.

(b) The Agreement between Poland and the U.S.S.R., signed at London on July 30, 1941

(c) The Agreement concluded at Washington between the Polish Government and the Government of the United States on July 1, 1942, concerning Lease and Lend.

Furthermore, multilateral agreements to which the Polish Government is a party, include .

(1) Declaration of the United Nations, signed at Washington on January 1, 1942, called the ' Atlantic Charter.'

(2) Inter-Allied Declaration against act of dispossession committed in territories under enemy occupation or control, signed at London on January 5, 1943.

(3) The final Act of the United Nations Food and Agricultural Conference, signed at Hot Springs on June 3, 1943.

(4) Agreement to set up a United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration, signed at Washington on November 9, 1943.

(5) Final Act of the Monetary and Financial Conference of the United Nations, signed at Bretton Woods on July 22, 1944.

(6) Agreement on Principles having reference to the Continuance of Co-ordinate Control of Merchant Shipping, signed at London on August 5, 1944

(7) International Sanitary Conventions, signed at Washington on January 5, 1945.

(8) The International Agreement and the Final Act of the International Civil Aviation Conference, signed at Chicago on December 8, 1944.

" When all the said agreements were being concluded not one constitutional state questioned the validity of the Polish Constitution or of the powers of the Polish President and the Governments appointed by him. Neither was any doubt ever raised by such States as to the right of the Polish President and Government to lead the Polish nation in the struggle against the German aggressor and to exercise supreme command over the Polish Armed Forces fighting at the side of the Allied Nations.

" Throughout the war the Polish nation made immense sacrifices for the common cause of the United Nations. The Resistance Movement in the Homeland, as well as the Polish Armed Forces on all fronts—on land, on sea and in the air—never ceased, until the day of victory, to struggle against the enemy, under the leadership of the constitutional President and Government of the Republic, which they recognise as the sole constitutional authority of the Polish State.

" II. The territories of the Polish Republic remain under a foreign military occupation and under the ruthless control of foreign military and police forces. The accomplished facts which have taken place in Poland since the outbreak of war are not the result of the will of the Polish people expressed either by constitutional or revolutionary means The war which began in defence of the integrity and independence of Poland, ended in depriving her of that independence and in placing the country under the control of an alien Power.

" III. In these circumstances, neither I myself nor my Government are in a position to recognise the accomplished facts unilaterally enacted

in Poland. The persecutions, which thousands of Poles are enduring in Poland to-day and which afflict with particular severity all those citizens of the Republic who have actively demonstrated their devotion to the cause of freedom and independence by their implacable struggle against the German invader, prove beyond any doubt that the so-called Polish Provisional Government of National Unity in no way represents the will of the nation, but constitutes a subservient body imposed on Poland by force from without.

"IV. The first attribution of the independence of a State is its freedom to choose a government. In the present circumstances, the source of the authority of the Government headed by M. Osobka-Morawski is a decision made not by the Polish nation, but by three foreign Powers, one of which controls *de facto* the whole administration of Poland through its army and police forces. The legal basis of the authority of that Government can be compared with the legal basis of the authority of the so-called governments set up in occupied countries during the war by Germany. In both cases they are based on the will of a foreign Power.

"V. In such circumstances and acting on instructions from my Government, I most solemnly protest against the recognition by the British Government of a Government imposed on Poland by force of an alien Power, which amounts to the recognition of the suppression of Poland's independence Once more in history, the Polish nation is being deprived of its independence, though this time not as a result of events which took place in Eastern Europe alone, but after a war which the United Nations waged in defence of law and justice. Notwithstanding the recognition by other Powers of its present subjection, the Polish nation will never give up its right to independent existence and will never cease to struggle for it.

"VI. As a protest against acts of violence inflicted on the Polish Nation, I am obliged to refuse to delegate my functions, without the approval of the constitutional Government of Poland, and to regard as an imposter any person pretending to be authorised to claim my office

Jan Ciechanowski, Polish Ambassador in Washington at a Press Conference vouchsafed the following comment to a similar Note delivered to the Government of the United States :—

"I am compelled to leave my post I do so with deep personal regret Before leaving, however, I feel it is my duty to stress the tragic situation in which the Polish nation now finds itself as a result of the world conflict which brought victory to Poland's Allies, while to Poland, who was the first to fight and who contributed so much to the common victory, it brought defeat and loss of independence. The fate of Poland will be better understood when it is realised that even defeated Nazi Germany loses less through this war than Allied Poland has been forced to give up as a result of victory. Moreover, Poland has been left under the uncontrolled occupation of a foreign Power which is imposing upon her a Government and a political, social and economic system alien to her

"Poland's record as a fighting member of the United Nations during this war is unassailable . . . While the war lasted, Poland's war effort was appreciated by her Allies and declarations of admiration and encouragement were lavished upon the Polish nation Poland was called the inspiration of nations and was repeatedly promised independence and support after the war. These words of encouragement were accepted at their face value by the Polish people. They firmly believed in the sincerity of the words

spoken to them on behalf of America, whom they had always trusted and admired.

"How can one explain to the indomitable fighters for freedom and democracy that after the victory of the United Nations the principles in defence of which they fought would not be applied to them? How can one explain to the Polish Nation that their country is but a home on wheels to be pushed eastwards or westwards as may suit the imperialist aims of either of its mighty neighbours in defiance of the principle of self-determination of peoples, for which they had fought?

"Public opinion is still unaware of the details of Russia's activities in Poland and of her treatment of the Poles during the war both in Poland and in Russia. The fact that the Soviet Government has consistently refused to admit any Allied or neutral observers inside Poland, is in itself ominous. As long as the war lasted, the Polish Government itself, for the sake of Allied unity, so essential to the common victory, contributed to this regrettable black-out of the facts of Polish-Soviet relations. Moreover, it hoped that by avoiding friction it might more easily reach an understanding with Russia, which it sincerely desired.

"Public opinion too easily forgets all the attempts made by the Polish Government and people to come to an understanding with Soviet Russia within the framework of international law. These efforts were invariably rejected by Russia. At any time during this war, problems requiring settlement between Poland and Russia could probably have been solved if Russia had allowed representatives of the legal Polish Government and of the Underground to sit down with her representatives and to tackle these problems in an atmosphere of mutual goodwill. But Russia preferred to present these problems not as Soviet-Polish controversies, but as quarrels of opposing factions of Poles.

"Poland represented by her legal Government was never allowed to participate in the discussions of Polish-Soviet relations. The Conferences at Teheran and Yalta are examples in point. The decisions concerning Poland must therefore be regarded by the Polish Nation as verdict, *in absentia*. No nation, no government truly representative of its peoples could ever accept decisions about their territory or system of government that were taken without its participation. The Polish people are deeply attached to their traditions of individual and national freedom. They will never cease to fight for these ideals."

AMID THE RUINS OF EUROPE

The dawn of 1945 was to find Poland at the bottom of the abyss of misfortune, having been over-run (with the connivance of the Governments of the Greater Democracies) by the second and stronger totalitarian invader.

The leaders of these Democracies who had preached the dogma of freedom—Roosevelt's 'four' and Churchill's 'seven'—confronted with reality had denied their principles and for some transient gains had countenanced a division of Poland which resulted in one half of that country becoming part of the Soviet Empire while the other half was made the helpless vassal of that same Empire. The crime of Russia and Germany partitioning Poland yet again in 1939 had been strongly condemned by those two leaders in the name of the United States of

America and Great Britain, yet now they were passing in silence over the wrongs endured by Poland at the hands of Russia. By their silence they agreed with the ruthless liquidation of the Home Army, the imprisonment of Poland's leaders and the trial staged by Moscow, they agreed with the annihilation of Europe's hope and trust in the British and American pledges and promises. They washed their hands of the tragedy of Poland, the impending doom of Europe and the "sovereign equality of peace-loving nations," rendering valueless, the enormous sacrifices of humanity in its desperate struggle for freedom. The most obvious fact was that the Second Great War, begun within the frontiers and in the area occupied by the peoples of the Western World, had come to an end with most of Europe under the rule of a Power alien to that world. . . The greatest war of all times which had been waged against the enforcement of the will of a stronger state on its weaker neighbours, was to culminate in the recognition of this terrifying aggression which now embraced, together with over half of Europe, *one-third of the population of the Western World*, that is, one-third of those peoples to whom freedom for the individual and freedom for the expression of his thoughts, was the focal point of existence, those peoples, who were of the persuasion that their individual lives should be merged into the life of a community moulded on those ideals of democracy which had emanated from Greece and Rome, and had been revived by the Renaissance, and the French, American, Polish revolutions. As a result of the Second Great War the frontier between the Western World and the area of "human slavery and pagan brutality," a gigantic 'Curzon Line' had been shifted some seven hundred miles westward inside Europe, to the Dardanelles, to the Alps, to the Elbe . An alien Power found itself in possession of the population of the Western World numbering as great as its own—it was a population infinitely more cultured and having a higher standard of life . . . It was not difficult to forsee that the Russians, owing to their system of government could not unite with such people as these and as a military police State, permit them to live in freedom. Therefore Russia was capable of solving this problem only in the most primitive of ways . . by the destruction of the economic and moral foundations of those nations within its grip.

The historian of the future will no doubt find cause to comment on the suicidal bravery of Poland. Like her other neighbours she had had it within her power to buy peace and the life of millions of her citizens, to avoid the destruction of all her national assets at a price . . recognition of Hitler's sovereignty. There was, however, no similar possibility of buying Soviet 'friendship,' for the clasp of Russia's hand has always been fatal to her weaker neighbour, and any alliance with her could only result in the annihilation of Poland politically and economically by the process of sovietisation.

Poland had attained the summits of democracy in her historical development—and had created the "free-est State in Europe." The Polish people had enjoyed an abundant freedom for centuries. After their country was carved up they fought desperately to regain this freedom, at the same time they fought for the liberty of all oppressed nations. They were one of the first people to realise so clearly that freedom in one country is bound up in the freedom of all countries throughout the world. The slogans on their banners raised against the Tsars had read "for our freedom and yours . . ."

When a re-armed Germany had threatened the peace, this heritage of democracy, confessed as a faith, rested as a heavy burden on the shoulders of the Polish people. It was this faith in democracy which had refused to allow them to sell their soul and march with Hitler against Russia, thereby securing victory for Germany over that country

Britain had encouraged the Polish Government to oppose the Germans, she had signed the Treaty with Poland in which she vowed to fight to a victorious end, and pledged her country not to declare any peace without the knowledge and participation of Poland. Speaking to Henderson in the last days of August 1939, Hitler had remarked · "Poland knows she is going to an imminent death, but she believes that she will be resurrected with the help of the British." Halifax had quoted Macaulay, in the Commons : "England is true to her engagements." It was beyond his power of vision to forsee Teheran, Yalta, and Potsdam . . .

Poland had been threatened by both her neighbours in 1939—Russia had demanded the Eastern half of her country—Germany the Western half. It was on the cards that had Poland yielded to Russia or Germany's demands at the time there would have been no war . . Had the Britain of 1939 concluded an alliance with Russia on the latter's terms—the partition of the Middle Zone between the Soviets and Germany—there would also have been no war, and Germany, in both hypotheses would have peacefully become master of the Continent, for it was hardly to be expected that she would have encountered any resistance from a wavering France or would have received effective opposition from the Soviets. The annihilation of the Soviets and the British Empire would have been the ultimate and inevitable consequence . . . Had Poland acted alone in 1939, refused Russia's terms and opposed Germany's aggression single-handed, she alone would have been smashed, but because Britain and Poland acted together, war was declared and came to a victorious end—a victorious end that is, for all members of the Alliance, except Poland.

The British had taken a realistic decision in 1939, and events were to prove them right. The Polish decision on the other hand, in view of the consequences for their country, revealed a grave lacking in political wisdom and foresight, based as it had been on Allied guarantees freely given but not subsequently honoured. France, Britain, Russia, and the United States were to harvest the fruits of the delaying action of the

Battle of Poland, for as a result of the ultimate victory the deadly menace to the security of the United Nations was removed, but Poland's struggle was to end in her annihilation.

In 1939, the Polish people chose the path compatible with their honour. They were of the opinion that their battle in Poland was the loss of a vanguard action, and there still remained the main forces of their Allies—that their victory would be Poland's victory as well. In spite of their treaty with France and Britain they had received no military support, but they still believed that loyalty to the common fight and faith in the fulfilment of the word given to comrade-in-arms was, as through the æons of history, one of the most valuable assets of civilization, and they found it impossible to believe that they were now to be abandoned. Generously fed on the chaff of promises, since their continued resistance was of extreme importance to Allied strategy, the Poles, helped by British armaments, fought on every battlefield where the Germans could be encountered. However, the bravery of the Polish nation seemed ill-rewarded, for in the landscape of this new Europe there was no room for a free Polish Republic. The loss of its independence was to pass almost unnoticed by the peoples of fighting democracies, for their governments had clamped down the strictest of censorship, and by means of propaganda endeavoured to convince the masses that Poland's independence had indeed been regained. Poland had been 'compensated for the loss of her Eastern Provinces at the expense of Germany' was to be their motto. 'Britain had honoured her pledges as far as possible and the Poles ought to be satisfied. If some of them were not, then it was their own fault.' 'We admit they have been treated badly, but . . .' They had indeed been 'treated badly', Polish casualties have been rated at the highest among all the countries of Europe, and up till 1945, had surpassed twenty-eight per cent. While Germany with her eighty million had had two million killed, Poland with a population of thirty-six million had suffered a loss of six million The damage in the country itself was immense, for from the first to the last day of war and after, she was either a battlefield or else she was in the zone of German and Russian occupation, which meant that the horrors of war were changed to the systematic horrors of a totalitarian regime with its pulverising of the community and its ruthless exploitation The deportation of the Polish people to Siberia and the final shove which sent Poland to the Oder were additional tribulations, and resulted in casualties and mortality which it is impossible to reckon in figures. At least half of the entire Polish nation at one time or another during the War had been driven from their homes—families dispersed, their possessions, their personal belongings lost. . . .

Germany's invasion of Russia and the lightning advance of Hitler's armies to the Volga and Moscow in 1941 made the lord of the Kremlin

more amenable to British advice and willing to resume diplomatic relations with all members of the camp of the United Nations except . . . Poland. The Kremlin had no desire to renounce the booty acquired by its covenant with Hitler. But Poland was closely linked with Britain and the Soviets were forced to consider that country as being a protege of Britain. Although the Kremlin was then in full cognisance as to how Russia intended shaping Europe after the war and the part Poland was to play in this plan, they nevertheless were content to shelve their intentions for the time being in order to benefit from British support. A Capitalist country helping Russia destroy one of its own kind, and the one who happened to be the most dangerous for her at that moment, presented a most entrancing picture as seen through the eyes of the Kremlin But this success did not blind them to the fact that Britain still remained that ' polar circle ' against whom the Soviets must play for the conquest of Europe when the danger of a powerful Germany in the centre, had been eliminated With these thoughts dominating the rulers of the Kremlin, every move, every effort, was made with the object of reaching as far westward, and of creating as many new Soviet Republics, as possible.

Working, in direct contrast to the Kremlin, on the assumption that Europe should return as close as possible to the Europe of the Versaille Treaty, lacking vision as to the future fabric of the Continent after the defeat of Germany, and still clinging to the belief that Germany would be a Great Power in post-war Europe, the British Government was content to anticipate that a large part of it would become the surface of Russo-German friction. Britain's aim therefore was restricted to securing herself in Western Europe and along the Mediterranean, doing all possible to limit her interests in the remainder of the old Continent.

The Kremlin merely regarded this attitude as a sign of weakness, and with the British renouncement of all interest in the fate of the Baltic States, the Kremlin thrust forward a demand for half Poland. Since the Soviet's territorial demands were still ' modest ' in those days, they anticipated that the Ribbentrop-Molotov line, termed the ' Curzon Line ' in order to make it more easily digestible to the British public, would eventually become the line between two Worlds. After this ' Line ' had been agreed upon in the pourparleys of the Big Three, Stalin stretched out once again for more and more. . . .

Britain's concessions to Russia, based on the theory that she had not after all guaranteed Poland's frontiers, not only placed the future of that country in jeopardy but the future of those ten other countries in the Middle Zone as well. Britain was obviously unwilling to take over the sceptre of leadership in Europe from the hands of a collapsing Germany. While London still cogitated on the fact that after all their concessions would not be paid for by Britain, the Kremlin understood well enough that by her voluntary retreat from Europe, begun during the darkest days in the history of the U.S S R., Britain had sustained a defeat at the

moment when the Germans were triumphant over Soviet Russia. The stability of Poland's eastern frontier, the eastern frontier of the 'British World' in Soviet eyes, had been trampled down.

Churchill's Government curtailed its role as the Ally of Poland, merely supporting her in the war against Germany, and contrary to the very spirit and letter of the 'Mutual Agreement,' refused to support her against Russian brutality and aggression, acquiescing to the same action on the part of the Russians which that identical British Government had condemned in the Germans. London restricted its activities in the Russo-Polish dispute to advice freely tendered to the unfortunate Polish Government, gradually withdrawing meanwhile from every position and giving in to every Soviet demand. From the very first instance, the helpless Polish Government, with its complicated problem of the masses of its people deported to the U.S.S.R., was left to fend for itself against the Kremlin. When the climax of the war on the Eastern front was reached, and when Russia had passed over to an attack against the Germans in the field and to an attack against the Allies in the diplomatic arena, the Kremlin no longer had any need to continue discussions with the Polish Government and forthwith severed relationship. However, London continued to use it as means for further bargaining with the Soviets, in an attempt to gain concessions from the Kremlin in other terrains. The U.S.S.R. was finally able to achieve the recognition by the Big Two of its puppet 'Lublin Committee.' How this entire procedure was manœuvred by the Soviets has already been recounted in detail . . . the blackmail of the Allies, the British lack of vision regarding the future of Europe . . . Roosevelt's idea of dividing the world into three Empires—were the main items from which with the utmost political craftsmanship Moscow extracted every ounce of advantage.

It would be unjust not to admit that the British Government did, in all sincerity, endeavour to save the independence of Poland, but it was also obvious that it had no real intention of intervening in full strength and, by defending Poland's freedom and the freedom of the Baltic States, in other words the first rampart of the Western World, save the freedom of Europe. Churchill, did not grasp the implications which, as representatives of that Europe, were underlying the Polish reasoning. And moreover, for some time at any rate, he also did not get the full implication of Stalin's words, and later apparently, did not wish to understand . . . His exaggerated fear complex—of Moscow achieving a separate peace with Hitler, effectively paralysed from its embryonic stage, any British endeavours to support Poland and her neighbours against Russian prevalence Churchill frantically clutched at Russia's plan of 'compensation' for Poland at the cost of Germany, giving Britain's sanction to the loss of Eastern Poland, although the western half of that country was not to be saved by this move. British diplomacy virtually had the ground swept away under its feet by this decision, and was dragged in the wake

of the Kremlin, for once Poland, the most valuable and well-defended position, had been lost, there could be no checking the Moscow conqueror. In October 1943, Stalin accomplished his vital break-through in the Polish Sector when by the Moscow Agreement he was able to gain the consent of his partners to the occupation of the Polish Republic without giving any guarantee to that country and without their control. The succeeding diplomatic coup was achieved by Stalin at Teheran when Churchill and Roosevelt agreed to the partition of Poland. Throughout the year which followed both British and American diplomacy did their utmost to gain the consent of the Polish Government to this carving-up of their country. They were to fail, but in the meantime the Kremlin was preparing its own governmental apparatus to instal in Poland—the Union of Polish Patriots—afterwards known as the People's National Council, which was established in Poland (following the advance of the Red Army) as the 'Lublin Committee.' Although gradually giving ground and in effect consenting to Poland's inclusion within the orbit of the Soviets' influence, the Allies still protested mildly—mainly as a sop to the raised voices of indignation in their countries. Finally they capitulated at Yalta where they resigned from the restoration of Poland's independence. The sovereign rights of the Polish Government were transferred into the hands of the Russian Foreign Commissar. The participation of the British and American Ambassadors in the Commission of Three, was merely a rather pitiful attempt to save face. Stalin's next move was to arrest the Polish leaders, Home Cabinet and political leaders, some of whom had been earmarked by London and Washington as the members of the future Polish Government, and to stage their trial. The arrest of Poland's legal representatives was proof in itself that this latest Yalta edition of the 'independence of Poland' was merely a farce. The addition of two or three democrats to the group of Communist agents, who had changed the title under which they worked from the 'Lublin Committee,' to the 'Polish Provisional Government' did not alter the fact that in reality this body remained as before, the instrument of the Kremlin, faithfully carrying out its orders, while the entire activities were undertaken solely in the interest of the Soviets. In the palace of Frederick II, in Potsdam, the same *Sans Souci* where one hundred and fifty years before that King had planned the partition of Poland, the work of he and his accomplices, Marie Therese and Catherine the Second, was out-matched by the representatives of Great Britain, United States and Russia. Thus the Polish problem was not solved at Potsdam, it was merely made more difficult and involved. From Poland was taken half the country which belonged to her by every right of God and man, and, as a new Soviet Republic she was handed as 'compensation' lands wrested from the conquered Germans.

The law of the steppes was to prevail in Europe. Only a strong Russia could maintain this law, and if German dynamism will not be completely

exhausted by defeat and depopulation and if Russia will ever weaken, then once again the Polish Sector is predestined to be the first to tremble beneath the force of a new and more terrible cataclysm.

Preoccupied with the conduct of the war, it seemed that the British Government only in 1943 began to consider the problem of the future of Europe after peace had been declared. During 1940–1942, London had benevolently regarded plans for local federations, the federation between Poland and Czecho-Slovakia, Union of the Middle Zone, Scandinavia and the Western bloc. . . . In March 1943, Churchill rather ambiguously announced the project regarding the formation (at some indefinite time) of a United States of Europe with a representative council. He " hardly expected to see it fulfilled in his lifetime "—he was then about sixty-eight years of age. This idea closely corresponded to Moscow's intention of creating in Stalin's lifetime a chain of Soviet States throughout Europe and Asia. The main difference lay in the ruling centre of such a union—and for the Soviets this could only mean Moscow and for Churchill and any European it could only mean London or some other European city.

The British Prime Minister's scheme was both nebulous and late, for after the entry of Japan and the U.S A. into the war, the future of Europe could not be settled without the settlement of the affairs of the whole world. History was marching forward with gigantic strides—with a speed unknown to former times

Roosevelt's idea of the total destruction of Germany as a Power, one of the most pregnant and revolutionary down the millenium of history, meant at the same time the annihilation of that Europe who was sheltering England from the East. If the policy of Russia pushing westward had here-to-fore meant an increase in the surface of her friction with Germany, now it covered . . . England. The British Government was caught unprepared, for Churchill was preoccupied with the one thought that Russia might stop fighting. It was only at Teheran Churchill at length realised how Roosevelt's scheme of shaping the world into three Empires meant in fact that there was at the present time only room for two—for those two who had a definite programme and the intention of further territorial expansion

With this problem on the table at Teheran, with this halving of Europe and the necessity of defending together with the Americans, the western part of it, it seemed very much as if the sun was beginning to set on the British Empire as a first-rate Power . . . The direct outcome of such a division of Europe could only be the removal of the centres of political and industrial strength from Europe to behind the Urals on the East and in the West to the United States. Britain, after her years of struggle, faced with the Soviets' domination of Europe, would therefore find herself the Eastern buttress of the American World and unfortunately

on the wrong side of the Atlantic.The front line between the Soviet and the Western civilisation will stretch across Europe and will mark the frontier of the British market on the East, for only the free countries will be able to buy British goods. On the West, Great Britain could hardly expect to compete with American industry

Since British political thought still lay in the realms of the " determination that no one country should dominate Europe . . ." and " it is too big for any nation to succeed in doing that " as Eden had considered during the Crimean Debate, Churchill saw no other issue than to agree with Roosevelt and Stalin at Teheran, and to surrender . . . unconditionally. By his agreement with the plan for a total defeat of Germany, by the destruction of her defensive power as well, and above all by his connivance with the supremacy of the other totalitarian Power in Europe, Churchill abandoned those vital principles which British policy had upheld throughout the centuries, from the days of Drake and the Spanish Armada. He had renounced his vision of securing Britain through a League of Europe. How far the British Government, stunned by the unexpected turn of events, was from reality could be seen by the fact that on April 21, 1944, the British Premier, after his return from Teheran, pondering aloud in the House, was still asking himself rather than his audience :—

" Should we draw closer to Europe—there is another question, an aim at creating under the Supreme World Council, a living union, an entity in Europe, a United States of Europe ? Or, again, should we concentrate upon our own Imperial and Commonwealth organisation, or upon our fraternal association with the United States, and put our trust in the English Channel, in air power and in sea power ? "

When these words were uttered the possibility of creating a United States of Europe, owing to the activities of the Soviets, had already disappeared, no doubt for some considerable time. Britain, with her lack of any constructive policy, with her wavering from one episode to another was already being pulled helplessly in the wake, first of the Soviets' policy, and then of the United States. The appeasement of Russia with regard to the Continent, undertaken by Churchill's Government for the benefit of the Kremlin's designs, was shortly afterwards to prove not only useless but clearly injurious for England. History will find it hard to justify the manœuvres of the British Government of that time, who helped the potential foe of the Western World establish his power over a vast section of it.

Looking back over history, some optimists, seeking comfort in comparisons, might well say that the European peace lasted for over one hundred years on the dead body of the Polish Commonwealth ; on this assumption therefore, an even longer period of peace might be expected by satiating the Soviet greed with the large portion comprising of her ten

neighbouring countries, and by carving-up Germany. The problem of the future World Peace cannot be fully understood however until it is appreciated that it had not been within the power of Russia during the nineteenth century to influence the foreign policy of the great states of the world, for she had not then possessed forces with which to endeavour to conquer Europe. Russia's sector of friction with the Western World had been limited to the German States, and with Europe standing in the background had proved sufficient to keep the Tsarist imperialists in check. Moreover, in the nineteenth century, peace in Europe was bound up with Europe alone, while in the twentieth century it was inseparably linked with the peace of the world, particularly when taking in account the great territorial designs and ambitions of Soviet Russia.

Victorious Stalin with brutal frankness forwarded the principle of power in international relations—only the strong have the right to live. Therefore, the ' strong ' decided and their decisions, announced after the Big Three meetings were to become the Alfa and Omega of the design for the new world order. Unity among the Three Great Powers was proclaimed (particularly by Britain) as the panacea for world anarchy. But the atmosphere of the world was impregnated with fear and the universal feeling was that civilisation could not be saved without the formation of one centre of super-control. The Soviets alone, adhering to their creed, openly linked this necessity with their intention of creating a universal Empire. With the growth of modern methods of communications, it was evident that it was no longer the case of ' ancient dreams ' of former conquerors (including Hitler's) who claimed the right of complete domination, but the existence of such a centre, which was the urgent need of the times. Accelerated by the Second Great War, the crystallisation of three great ruling centres to replace the dozens which had existed until now, was a gigantic move in this direction The world, still suffering from the birth-pangs of war, was struggling to find solid ground on which to re-build its life, but the task can only prove hopeless until existing anarchy has been brought to an end. The attempt at the creation of a new league of nations proved abortive before even it was in its embryonic stages It failed as soon as the Soviets indicated their mistrust and unwillingness to mix with the peoples of the Western World, and when they continued to oppose their Soviet order to that World. Thus the strength of the greater Powers and their ambitions and ability to expand was to remain the decisive factor in shaping the future of mankind. How each of the partners had achieved power is of interest to recall, for the past foretells the future . . . It is often forgotten or better perhaps not realised that democracy or tyranny is a mood of life and cannot easily be changed—that yesterday's slave will not easily permit the peoples of democracy to maintain institutions they have created, for his foremost instinct is to impose his own way of thinking and manner of living

upon them . . the Gestapo and the N.K.V.D., die only with the regime which spawned them. It is now an agreed precept that the United States has had a beneficial influence on the national States in the western hemisphere by reason of its policy of non-intervention, leaving its sister republics free to work out their problems in their own way. The American Continent attained its unity without any great struggle, and was able to develop the common ideals of democracy under the protecting shadow of the United States. A similar development was achieved in Great Britain, whose more advanced colonies had achieved complete independence. Ireland was the most convincing instance of England's policy of non-intervention—the Irish Free State had refused to enter the war, and although its assistance had seemed of the greatest value to Britain she did not violate its neutrality, nor compel that State to wage a war against Germany—a complete contrast to Soviet Russia, who had occupied the Baltic States " in order to prevent them becoming German bases," an aggression which in the first instance had been undertaken with the understanding of Germany.

Russia, governed by an entirely different set of rules, had developed as a military State, and her expansion, contrary to Britain, who like the Americans had brought economic prosperity in the wake of their territorial penetration, was carried out exclusively by an armed conquest, followed by the ruin of the structure of any country under her occupation through an excessive exploitation for the benefit of the central Power—Moscow.

Russia shapes her life only by her own experiences and has had no use for any western culture, in fact, she is scared of its influence. The Soviets of to-day, like the White Tsars of the past, are strictly isolating their subjects from any contact with the world except through strongly controlled governmental channels. It is a deeply-rooted and inherited mistrust which can hardly be overcome, for not only is it embedded in the soul of the rulers of the Russian Empire—Great Russians, but it forms the basis of their very being. Soviet Communism with its idea of Moscow as the centre of world power, has its roots in the Russian belief of the Middle Ages that Moscow was to be the ' third Rome ' and the Great Russians the ' chosen people.' So deeply embedded in the minds of the Muscovite Tsars was the conviction of their messianic destiny that they appointed themselves head of the Church and the Inquisition. To the Tsars, toleration of heresy was associated with evil—in the era of the Soviets, this heresy became the ' Fascist evil,' and they were to take upon themselves the task of hunting this ' evil ' throughout the world by ' liberating ' the peoples from their non-Communist governments . . .

It is an oft-repeated fallacy that the Soviet doctrines, methods and tactics appertain to modern times, and to attempt to trace their origin from the creation of the All-Communist Party, or to the coming of power of the Bolsheviks. Whereas, in order to understand Soviet ethos and the underlying principles of their politics, the history of the

Muscovite rulers Ivan III and Ivan the Terrible, Peter the Great, and Nicholas I, should be studied before the works of Lenin and Stalin to obtain a comparison with present day reality in the Russia of the twentieth century. It will be found that she is a country so tied down to her determination to expand by conquest that she has never yet found the opportunity to maintain equal progress with other peoples in the development of her social and economic life, The foremost law of Russian policy has always been the conquest of new territories and the execution of this law is the principle task of the absolute ruler, who is synonymous with the State. During the last few years Soviet philosophy had zealously drawn material from the Muscovite past for this very purpose. No longer does the present-day Russian condemn the ancient Tsars and executioners of the peoples, he has returned to a worship of Ivan the Terrible, Peter the Great, Catherine the II, and to the glorification of the most eminent representatives of Tsarist tyranny, as to those who were the founders of the actual Soviet Empire—with its rulers the Great Russians. The Western World, particularly the peoples of the Atlantic Democracies who have not possessed within their countries a ruling class connected with any particular nationality, could not suspect of its existence in Russia. Throughout the centuries, this ruling national class had executed its internal expansion in the most ruthless of ways by the extermination of the leading elements of the other nationalities and by a determined russification which meant an enforced change over to Russian nationality and mode of life by depriving the conquered peoples of their language, religion and national institutions.

Under the Soviets there was to be no change in this governmental policy apart from its slogans, and, with the perfecting of the police-machine, this process only gained in speed and intensity. From the first that Great Russian element, "the most conscious proletariat and victor in the Revolution" was recognised as " Herrenvolk," and was to occupy the key positions throughout the Soviet Empire.

After the defeat of Germany and Japan, Russia, as the sole Imperialist Power, stood alone on the threshold of a new era in the struggle for world hegemony, anticipating her expansion by acquisition of new territories. With her strongly organised, compact ruling centre, whose main task was the preparation for new campaigns, Soviet Russia was still spiritually at any rate, in the position to attack But her war-potential was temporarily incapable of this task when taking into account the strength of the Atlantic Powers. Exhausted by the German invasion and the enormous loss sustained by her population, Russia, overburdened with her gigantic booty, now comprising of one-third of the Western World, possessed neither a modern army nor the possibility of creating an army such as the United States and Great Britain would have at their disposal. The discovery of the atomic bomb by the Anglo-Saxon

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Powers was to prove an additional and powerful instrument of war for the latter, but even this did not spell finis to the blackmail imposed so long and so successfully by the Soviets By means of a continued fifth column action they were endeavouring to subordinate such territories as they could occupy without risk of war with their powerful allies. Meanwhile, within the Russian sphere of influence in Europe, the strengthening of their position was undertaken with all possible speed by the sovietisation of those countries, by the destruction of the independent status of the community, the existing order of life and by their inclusion in the economic system of the U.S S.R. Defying the Atlantic Democracies to intervene in the affairs of that part of the Western World now behind the "iron curtain," the Soviets were at the same time advancing new territorial demands which covered parts of the Mediterranean and in effect "cut Britain's throat across Europe." The Kremlin's continuation of the programme taken over from Hitler was concealed no longer. Britain, for so long spell-bound by Churchill's masterful oratory on "our good friend, Russia," now began to experience the inconvenience of that country as a close neighbour Since neither Britain nor the United States possessed any plan for the future of Europe and by this time had abandoned all ideas of her unity, the return to the purely defensive conception of some new version of the Maginot Line was the sole possibility which remained to the Western World. In light of the fact that for 400 years Russia has never ceased to develop territorially and attack her neighbours and is now animated by a new eruption of imperialism, it can be stated with impunity that she will not be deterred by any defence — once she has acquired the suitable weapons

Whatever else is on record, it cannot be denied that the main outcome of the Second Great War by some strange move of fate was, that the Atlantic Democracies had apportioned half Europe to the Soviet World. The descendants of Lincoln agreed to the transfer of one-third of the peoples of their own race, peoples whose sons had given so much of their life blood to building up the greatness of the United States, those Poles, Hungarians, Czechs, Serbs, Rumanians, Lithuanians, Estonians, Lethonians, Austrians and Germans, from the world of democracy to the world of slavery.

Way back in 1941, when the Government of the United States was thinking in the terms of the Atlantic Charter, Roosevelt, in the name of the American people, vowed that "we will not accept a Hitler-dominated world. And we will not accept a world like the post-war of the 1920's, in which the seeds of Hitlerism can again be planted and allowed to grow." But by 1945 the world appeared in a far more sorry state than in the 1920's, for the surface where democracy could flourish had decreased, and tyranny and slavery were surging in waves over the

eleven states of Europe which had been "compromised" from existence while that last champion of free Europe, the Polish Army which had fought alongside the American and British Forces was predestinated to be disbanded and the 250,000 Polish soldiers of that Army who refused to go back to their enslaved country settled in Great Britain.

The United States headed mankind as the greatest democratic Power to claim that she would accept only a world consecrated to freedom of speech and expression, freedom of every person to worship God in his own way, freedom from want and freedom from terrorism. From her, whose avowed and "strong purpose was to protect and to perpetuate the integrity of democracy," the world was seeking guidance and support against the dark forces of tyranny which only one great Power now had at its disposal. To America were turned the eyes of all those peoples who, by the twisted path of war, now found themselves under Russian prevalence, and who asked themselves whether freedom was only to be the privilege of those lucky enough to find themselves in the American and British sphere of influence Yet by now the strength of the English-speaking world was so great that there no longer remained any spot on the earth where these slaves of a tyrannical regime could not be released by democracy. The era of atomic-energy had opened a new era for world history — the United States had before her the possibility of introducing the golden age by abolishing war, compelling all the states of the world to disband their armed forces and of allowing democracy to flower in every corner of the earth. The world looked to the United States for guidance.

Poland, alongside the other European Nations was associating her hopes with the belief expressed by Roosevelt in his address to Congress on January 6, 1942 :—

"We are inspired by a faith which goes back through all the years to the first chapter of the Book of Genesis : 'God created man in His own image.'

"We on our side are striving to be true to that Divine heritage. We are fighting as our fathers have fought, to uphold the doctrine that all men are equal in the sight of God. Those on the other side are striving to destroy this deep belief and to create a world in their own image — a world of tyranny and cruelty and serfdom.

"This is the conflict that day and night now pervades our lives. No compromise can end that conflict. There never has been — there never can be — successful compromise between good and evil. Only total victory can reward the champions of tolerance and freedom and faith."

APPENDIX

Excerpts from the Crimean Debate in the House of Commons, February 27 — March 1, 1945.

Mr. Greenwood (*Labour, Leader of the Opposition*) : I do not think that the Big Three ought to determine the fate of the smaller nations which do not possess either our economic resources or our military power. The value of a nation to human life, culture and civilisation is not measured by its size, it is measured by its quality, and I hope that in dealing with liberated Europe that will be borne in mind. I agree that what is far more important, (than the territorial problem) is the preservation of a free, independent, sovereign Poland in the fullest sense of the term. As I have said, it is not the size of the body, it is the quality of the body that matters, and that is so in the case of Poland . . I would point out to the House, that it is foreign to the principles of British justice, that the fate of a nation should be decided in its absence and behind its back. I do not regard the territorial problem as vital, but the other problem is vital—that there should be in the East of Europe the living beacon of Poland free and independent, as a warning note to any future aggressive Germany. I do not hold any brief for the Polish Government. I do not think it has been too well treated by His Majesty's Government. . . . I say it really is a cardinal sin for three Great Powers—one of whom has an interest which we have not got—in the absence of the people, whose lives are being bartered away, to determine the future of any country

The Prime Minister : The whole object is to create a Polish Government which can, unitedly, decide upon the future.

Mr. Greenwood : I think we all want a united Polish Government which can decide upon the future but, as regards the territorial issue, the Poles have been allowed to say very little about how their coat is to be cut. The fact is that before a decision of this kind is taken, I really do feel that the Poles—all the Poles—might have been consulted in the matter If I were to enter into the realms of controversy on this issue, I would say that an authority has been given to the Polish end of the Polish Government, rather than to the Government which has hitherto been recognised by this country and is still recognised However, it is perfectly clear . . . that there must be a provisional Government, national in character, representative of all organised political movements, to prepare for the future of the Polish people. (Hon Members : " All ? ") Yes, all reorganised political movements, and I include the Communists in that. . . Then, when we get free and unfettered elections, the people can decide for themselves. It is a pity that in these initial arrangements, both the Lublin Government and the Government here were not properly consulted.

The Prime Minister : They are being consulted now.* It was not possible to invite a Polish Government to Yalta, because one of the Great

* The Polish Government was never in fact consulted.

Powers recognised one Government and the others recognised another, and it was absolutely necessary for us to adjust our views upon that great division before any invitation could be sent and before we knew to which Government it should be sent. What is happening now is that a Government recognised by all the Powers, is being brought into being representative of the broad elements of Polish national life. That Government will settle, subject to what I have said about the election being free and unfettered, the future course of affairs in Poland and will have the recognition of all the united Governments, I trust, until such time as its situation can be placed on unchallengeable footing by free, unfettered, universal sufferage exercised at the elections.

Lord Dunglass (*Conservative*) : One reason why there is world concern over the differences between Russia and Poland is because it is the first case, a test case, in the relationship between a Great Power wielding great military might, and her smaller and weaker neighbour. That is the reason why there is world concern over this matter. As far as Poland is concerned there is no country which by reason of its opposition to tyranny has earned a greater right to independence There is no country to which independence has been more specifically pledged in treaty and declaration, and there is no country which in its weakness, has a greater claim upon the magnanimity of its friends The British approach to this problem cannot rest upon sentiment, but our hearts would need to be of stone if we were not moved by these considerations But our relations are generally specific undertakings given in treaty, both to Poland and to Russia.

This House is familiar with our obligations to Poland. What are the instruments which govern our relationships to Russia ? First, there is the Atlantic Charter, which is not as ethereal as some people would have us believe. It is in the Preamble to the Anglo-Russian Treaty of 1942. It is deliberately brought into this Agreement as a guide to the conduct of Great Powers towards other Powers in the world . . . What about the free elections about which I asked the Prime Minister ? Do they give a real hope that that section (of the Atlantic Charter) will be fulfilled which reads

> " that they wish to respect the rights of all people to those forms of Government under which they wish to live "

Are there arrangements to end the shootings and deportations and the outlawing of the Polish Home Army ? Do they give real promises that the conditions will be fulfilled in which

> " all the men in all the lands may live out their lives in freedom from fear ? "

The questions which arise at the moment are under the last two headings, but the Prime Minister is right about the territorial settlement The Russians have never receded for one moment, from the view that in this matter they alone are the judges and what they have taken, they will keep. That is their attitude, and I feel rather different from some other Members about this territorial matter. I believe that if you try to force what is an act of power, within the framework of the Atlantic Charter, you will not whitewash the Act but you will break the Charter When the Prime Minister says that he accepts this as an act of justice, I must take a fundamentally opposite view We have, dozens of times in our history, accepted this kind of arrangement as a fact of power. I accept it as a fact of power, but I cannot be asked to underwrite it as an act of justice This is not a quibble in words It is not a quibbling legalistic interpretation I believe, most profoundly, that it is an essential British interest that we should be seen to preserve our moral standards in international behaviour. When our plenipotentiaries go abroad and sign agreements for us, they go, it is true,

in command of great Imperial Power, but they also go as representatives of a great Christian people.

. . . I would never encourage the Poles to believe that they could get this territory back. I would not encourage them to believe that we can help them to do it All we can do is to aid them to achieve a Poland as nearly as possible equal in status to what it was before the war

Sir William Beveridge (*Liberal*) . . I am afraid that I cannot accept all the arguments which the Prime Minister gave in support of his proposals as to Poland I need not emphasise the differences except to say that the fact that Russia has liberated any part of Poland is not any reason why she should have any part of it. . . . I do not feel happy about the suggestion that Poland should be encouraged to extend westwards into territories which are now German, and which presumably will still be occupied by Germans. It is not necessary for the purpose of giving the Poles a proper homeland. The Prime Minister committed himself—I do not know whether he meant to commit the House—to certain changes in Upper Silesia. They are not in the White Paper.

. . We must take great care to make certain that those who, on our behalf, are concerned with the formation or advising as to the formation of the new Provisional Government have every opportunity for their work, that they are able to discover facts not only in Moscow but in Poland, that they are able to make certain that before the election takes place, all Poles, wherever they may be, have got back to Poland; that they should make certain that all Poles, whether pro-Russian or not can become candidates; and finally, that the election is held fairly and under international observation, which means elections held after the withdrawal of any Soviet armies and any Soviet police. All of us must be there on equal terms as international observers. That is essential. Our honour is pledged, if we support this Vote of Confidence, to see that Poland gets an independent Government, chosen to please the Poles and no one else. We cannot accept anything that does not allow us to fulfil that obligation

Captain McEwen (*Conservative*) · . . But I chiefly regret Poland. Poland, if not the reason for, was at any rate the occasion of, our declaring war in 1939, and it will be denied by nobody that our relations with Poland have ever since then been excellent, and moreover that the services rendered by the Poles to us and the Allied cause in every theatre of the European war have been beyond all praise. . Even before the recent (Crimean) Conference, doubts were expressed in many quarters concerning what might be the result of that Conference when it was held. I have a copy of the Memorandum given by the Polish Government to His Majesty's Government and the American Government on 22nd January, which states that the Polish Government are confident that the Government of Great Britain will not agree to be a party to decisions concerning the Polish Government without the consent of that Government In the same document the Polish Government express the hope that at the conference of Allied Powers, the British Government will give expression to their resolve not to recognise the puppet Government and say that the recognition of such a Government in Poland would be tantamount to a betrayal of the inhabitants of Poland, in defence of whom the present war was begun. That shows at least, that these doubts were held and felt in many quarters. Nor was it any secret that His Majesty's Government's Ambassador in Moscow was strongly of the opinion that the Lublin Committee ought to be recognised as the sole legitimate Government of Poland at an early date. I think there was no secret about that. . This is something evidently which is capable of widely divergent interpretation. On the one hand, my right hon.

Friends averred that it was a masterly compromise, wherein nothing was given up and all is referred to the future. On the other, the view taken by the Polish Government, and shared by not a few in this country, that it amounts to little more or less than a complete acceptance of the Russian point of view This also, let me say, is my own view, and it is one which I can assure you, Sir, is at least widely shared in Scotland

. I want to deal in the first instance with the excuse which has been put forward—What else could we have done? I do not say that has been put forward to-day, but I have heard it before. Quite apart from the unworthiness of such a reason being put forward by a great Power which has been dealing, presumably, on a equal footing with other great Powers in a conference, in my view it would have been better to say frankly that we could not, in this instance, agree. . .

Then it is said · " If that is the line you take, then you would have left the Poles in Poland to what you consider to be a Russianised Lublin Government and done nothing for them " On the whole, and taking the admittedly pessimistic view of the future of the Poles under the arrangements which have been reached, which I do, I would answer " Yes, I do not think they would have been much worse off " Believe me, I am not only thinking, or even mainly thinking, in this respect of Poland, I am thinking of this country Had we refused to agree, and stuck to the Arciszewski Government . . . we would at least now have no cause to be ashamed. If it is said further that had we done so we would have found ourselves in complete diplomatic isolation, why then, I can only marvel that even now, at this late hour, we have still not learned the lesson of 1940—that it is a very little thing to stand alone if we are convinced that we are standing for the right, nor, in that cause, will we ever lack friends for long. . . .

Without, I trust, causing any provocation, perhaps I may illustrate the situation as I see it by a simple simile It is as if I saw someone, to whom I was bound by ties somewhat in excess of the ordinary ties of humanity, in the embrace of a bear My expressions of concern are met by all sorts of re-assuring and soothing words I am told that this bear is, in fact, a tame bear; I am reminded that bears have many engaging qualities, that they love honey and that they occasionally indulge in a playfulness which is almost human; as to what is happening before my eyes, I am told that I can talk as much as I like about a bear's hug but that is nothing more or less than prejudice and, in fact, this is merely the bear's way of showing his affection Well, that may be, but I cannot help feeling that history, natural and otherwise, is in this matter on my side. What has been done in the Crimea Conference has been done, but I for one cannot join in the chorus of approval which has greeted its doing. . I feel I cannot allow it to pass without registering a definite but uncompromising protest

Captain Graham (*Conservative*) The system of Government where the rights and development of the individual are sacred, cannot exist peacefully side by side with another system of government, where the individual simply does not count. For the one system to live, the other must die Therefore it was, I presume, with an equally deep conviction on the part of the three Heads of State at Yalta of the vital necessity of the rights of the individual that, in their pronouncement on the Polish question, they insisted on free and unfettered elections being held in Poland as soon as possible and based on universal suffrage and a secret ballot Of course it would not be possible to consider Poland truly liberated unless the Poles could claim and practise such an elementary form of democracy. . . .

. . . the right of all peoples to choose the form of Government under which they would live If the three Heads of Government are sincere in

attaching importance to this principle, how comes it that in discussing the future of Poland no representative of the London Polish Government was called into council? Two out of the three participating Governments have recognised its legality, and that Government has made its views quite plain in the Memorandum which it sent to the British and American Governments on 22nd June. The present legal Government of Poland was consulted neither before nor after the Conference. Nor was it even mentioned in the announcements of the decisions of the Conference. Yet, this is the sole legal constitutional and recognised Government of our Ally Poland. This is the Government to which the Polish Armed Forces, now numbering nearly 200,000, and the Polish Home Forces of the Underground Army have sworn loyalty and allegiance, as the rightful office-bearers of their nation and state. Their Prime Minister, Mr. Arciszewski, a veteran Socialist, and so representative of the Polish people that he was the head in Poland, until last autumn, of the whole of the Underground Movement has simply been ignored. He has not even been received by our Prime Minister, who legally recognised the truly representative quality of this Polish Government.

On Thursday last I was visited in this House by the representatives of half a million Polish workers and underground fighters from France, mostly Socialists and miners, thoroughly good democrats. They were unanimously supporters of Mr. Arciszewski and his Government, both in opposition to the unconditional surrender of the Eastern half of Poland, and to the surrender of the independent Government of Poland, into the hands of the Lublin puppets. . .

On 15th December practically every speaker in the House affirmed the utterly unrepresentative quality of the Lublin Committee, yet it seems that the opinion of this House has been flouted by the decisions of the Yalta Conference. The Lublin Committee is referred to in the pronouncement of the Conference as the "Provisional Government now functioning in Poland" and this body, vaguely expanded, is to be the new Provisional Government of Poland charged with the holding of free and unfettered elections in that country. We know the importance which the three Heads of Government assembled at Yalta so rightly attached to these free and unfettered elections, but what sort of chance have they? The so-called Provisional Polish Government at this moment is so controlling the country that no independent opinion, however democratic, is allowed to be published at all, all wireless receivers have been confiscated and broadcasts can only be heard at certain places controlled by the Provisional Government. The Lublin Minister of Education has informed the professors of Cracow University that the Rector of the university and the Deans of the Faculties will not be elected as formerly but appointed by the Government. Professors, writers, artists and scientists are forced to sign declarations denouncing the Polish Government in London as traitors to the Polish cause and especially attacking the President, M. Raczkiewicz, M. Arciszewski, and even our Prime Minister's favourite, M. Mikolajczyk. If they refuse to do this they are arrested and imprisoned or else just murdered.

At this moment members of the former Home or Underground Army, particularly officers, are being arrested, deported, and even shot. The private soldiers of the Underground Army are mostly being rounded up, and forcibly enlisted under the command of General Zymierski the Lublin commander-in-chief. He, incidentally, served five years imprisonment in pre-war Poland for having, when in the Quarter-Master-General's Department, embezzled money allotted to the purchase of gas-masks for the Army. I presume that the Big Three do not expect General Anders,

and the honourable officers of the Polish Army still fighting by our side, to accept the leadership of such a Commander-in-Chief! Finally, since 1939, more than 2,000,000 Poles have been forcibly deported to Russia and Siberia. Such are the auspices under which these three unhappy gentlemen, Messrs. Molotov, Harriman and Sir Archibald Clark-Kerr, are expected to supervise the reorganisation of the present provisional Government, and enable free and unfettered elections to take place. What optimism, what heroic faith in the democratic behaviour of the actual rulers of present-day Poland, the Russian secret police!

. . . How can the Prime Minister reconcile the honour of this country with his ignoring of the explicit understanding at the time of the signing of the Anglo-Polish Treaty of Mutual Assistance that, if this country were to enter into any new undertakings with a third State, their execution should at no time prejudice either the sovereignty or territorial inviolability of Poland, and *vice versa*? If the right hon. Gentleman felt that, in spite of that explicit undertaking, he had, none the less, to make some arrangement which would violate the territorial inviolability of Poland, the least he could do was to take into consultation the other party to this Treaty, which is the legal constitutional Government of Poland sitting in London It is, indeed, a mournful reflection that this Empire, which stood alone in 1940, except for Poland, against the might of triumphant Nazi Germany, cannot now, when she has mighty Allies by her side, stand up for juster treatment of her first and most martyred Ally of this war But if, indeed, it be so, let us at least comport ourselves with dignity and honour Do not let us pretend that something which is unjust is in reality right. Do not turn away from our own shores those who have given their lifeblood for the protection of our homes

If we must consent to the fact of our Polish Allies being robbed of their homes, let us find them a new home in our Empire or elsewhere. . . . To send them back to a Sovietised Poland, or to hand over Poland to the Government of the Lublin Committee, with the power that lies behind it, would be nothing less than the betrayal of innocent blood. We can only conscientiously consider the decision of the Yalta Conference in regard to Poland if the Government can insure that contingents of Allied troops shall be present in the country to supervise, not merely the elections but the general conditions of life itself in Poland. Otherwise, we cannot avoid that most severe of all condemnations which lies upon those who betray innocent blood.

Mr. Petherick (*Conservative*) · I beg to move, at the end of the Question, to add

> " but, remembering that Great Britain took up arms in a war of which the immediate cause was the defence of Poland against German aggression and in which the overriding motive was the prevention of the domination by a strong nation of its weaker neighbours, regrets the decision to transfer to another power the territory of an ally contrary to treaty and to Article 2 of the Atlantic Charter and furthermore regrets the failure to ensure to those nations which have been liberated from German oppression the full right to choose their own government free from the influence of any other power."

In moving the Amendment which stands in my name and to which the names of a number of my hon Friends are also attached—and to which other hon. Members have added their names since it was put on the Paper—I hope that the House will sympathise with me in the very difficult task that I have set myself to-day. The Amendment is the result of no idle *putsch*. Nor has it been hastily conceived. Those hon Friends of mine

who feel very deeply on this matter have had long and various consultations. We have considered every possible course of action, but we have come to the very reluctant conclusion that we must put upon the Order Paper of the House of Commons an Amendment which would express our views. I hope that the moderation of the words that I propose to use to-day, will be taken for what in fact, it is, an understatement, and that hon Members will not think that, because of that moderation, my hon Friends and I do not feel most deeply and sincerely in this matter. . . .

The Amendment contains a direct criticism of the policy of the Government, and the decisions which were arrived at, as a result of the Yalta Conference. It contains, therefore, a criticism of the Prime Minister as head of His Majesty's Government. . .

. . . The great matter on which we disagree, and which has caused us to put down the Amendment is the case of Poland Let it not be thought that those of us who take this view very strongly are more Polish than the Poles. . . .

. . We are looking at this matter through British eyes. We know that the Poles feel their national entity strongly and that is partly why we sympathise with them so much in this case We feel also strong views in the matter from a British point of view We feel that we are British, through and through and out the other side, and it is particularly for that reason that we regret anything which might be done or is done which will have the effect of casting British honour into doubt The only difference between the cases of Esthonia, Latvia, Lithuania and Poland in this matter is that Poland was the country for which Great Britain took up arms in 1939. It was a *casus belli* as we know. There was the greater over-riding motives of preventing the domination of Europe by sheer force of arms. . . . I would say that as a result of this Yalta Agreement, if it goes through, Poland is to lose nearly half her territory, a third of her population, 85 per cent. of her oil and natural gas, half her timber and peat, half her chemical industry, nearly half her grain, hemp and flax, and nearly 40 p cent of her water power, potassium mines and phosphates and the ancient Lion City of Lwów which stood up for centuries against attacks from North and South and from the East.

Poland is not all Pripet marshes. It has stood for countless generations against invader after invader, coming from different parts of Europe and the East. I have told the House what is happening , can all that be made good by a postdated cheque, by the cession of territory now belonging to Germany and containing we know not what ? That is all in complete defiance of four treaties, particularly those entered into between Poland and Russia. It is contrary to the Atlantic Charter, about which I should like to have something to say before I sit down. It is also contrary to the Anglo-Polish Treaty of Mutual Assistance of 1919. I referred to the Treaty and the secret Protocol attached to it on 15th December I do not over-estimate the importance of that secret Protocol because it seems to me that the passages in that Treaty have a direct connection with my next question—how about the Atlantic Chai ter. In the Yalta Agreement, the Atlantic Charter is, I think, rather ingenuously and certainly unctuously mentioned on more than one occasion . .

This Atlantic Charter was brought out with all the pontifical " bally-hoo " of the Thirty-nine Articles, the Ten Commandments, President Wilson's Fourteen Points and the Beveridge Report, rolled into one. . . Article 2 of the Atlantic Charter was the one which worried me most at the time because I feared that it applied to Germany, and I did not wish to apply Article 2 to Germany. What has happened since ? About two years later,

the Prime Minister was obliged to say—and I was most grateful to him—that Article 2 did not in fact apply to that country. But I did at least think that it applied to our Allies. What does it apply to now? It is only a guide and no longer a rule I suppose the Atlantic Charter, with that Clause in it, applies only to those countries who are so strong as to be able to protect themselves or so remote as to be out of danger

I have heard it said that the Poles are a difficult people Perhaps they are So should we be, if half our country were to be given away to somebody else. The Poles have no monopoly of being difficult in the world to-day But the Poles have not been conquered. They are still fighting They are fighting with us and they are fighting in the underground movement. This is not a case of *vae victis*. We know perfectly well that when a country has been defeated, she must bear the consequences. She may have to bear the most dreadful horrible consequences but that is because she lost the war In this case Poland has not lost the war, she is our Ally, she is our continuing Ally and she is still fighting by our side.

May I now come to the terrible situation with which we are now faced as a result of Yalta? This is the fifth partition of Poland, although it is only the first in which this country has taken part In the last 200 years this is the fifth time in which Poland has been cut up by adjoining Powers Hon. Members have said in the course of this debate that they look upon the second part of our Amendment, which refers to the question of a free and independent Poland, as being paramount, and that the question of territory does not matter so much. . . But do not let us think that this question of territory does not matter at all. You can argue perfectly well about the ethnological lay-out on the east of the Curzon line. We have been given some figures which show that there are two-fifths Poles, two-fifths Ukrainians and one-fifth Ruthenians and Jews That is not the point The point at issue, it seems to me, is not a question of the rearrangement of boundaries. I think it was Pitt who said · " Roll up the map of Europe." The map of Europe has been rolled and unrolled a good many times since then—but in this case this territory of Poland was guaranteed by treaty, freely entered into between Russia and Poland and three times re-affirmed by implication and by the whole tenor of succeeding treaties. . . I believe you will get no peace in Europe unless the sanctity of treaties which confirm boundaries as a result of discussions freely entered into, is recognised and honoured. There will be no peace in Europe for 100 years unless we return once more to that principle.

I would like to say a little now about the question of Lublin Government, and the Provisional Government which is proposed as a result of Yalta. It is to be chosen, we understand, by three eminent men—a brace of Ambassadors and a Foreign Secretary I wonder if we would like that very much and if we would show much confidence in a Government so chosen for us. Would any country in the whole wide world accept such a Government? Surely one of the principles of the Atlantic Charter is the right of every people to choose its own form of Government But this Government is being chosen for the Poles. There is one more point I should like to make on this. There are in part of the Yalta communique dealing with Poland, some sinister references to the suggestion, or the fact that only anti-Nazis will be allowed to vote and take part in these elections. What does that mean? Does it mean that anybody who is declared by the Provisional Government—or it may be by the Lublin Government for all I know, to be a Nazi is not to be allowed to vote. If this is the case, there can be no possible free elections in Poland, because it has only to be declared that a man is a Nazi—and he may be the leader of the Socialist Party for

all we know—and he will not be entitled to vote. I would ask the Foreign Secretary when he replies to deal with that point, and to tell us why that peculiar expression "anti-Nazi" was put in that document. I suggest it is clearly dragged in for this reason There are no Nazis in Poland and there never have been—they have no Lavals, no Darlans, no Quislings, no collaborationists. Why then was this expression introduced into that part of the document?

I am now coming rapidly to my conclusion. I do believe most fervently not only that we should continue to work with Russia but that we can continue to work with Russia But co-operation is not a one-way street There must be give-and-take in all these matters. We have not heard Russia's case at all. The Prime Minister yesterday did not deal with Russia. We have been waiting for the Russian case to be stated in this Debate, but we have not yet heard it. There must be a case, because it must be strong enough to over-ride four treaties and the Atlantic Charter, all of which the Russian Government have signed Let us then hear from the Foreign Secretary what Russia's real case is.

The Prime Minister referred yesterday to Sir Eyre Crowe and Lord Curzon who, in considering the Curzon Line, said that it was a fair agreement at the time. Neither of them however is here to give evidence, nor so far as I know does that evidence appear in any of the documents or the telegrams of the time What did appear was the fact, the perfectly plain and established fact, that the Curzon Line was an armistice line . . .

. . I believe that when some of us tried to state the case on 15th December in this House, we stated what was true Speaker after speaker said that they believed—and we had an idea this was going to happen—that the proposed treatment of Poland was wrong. Speaker after speaker got up and, shrugging their shoulders, accepted it, as it were, as a *fait accompli*. My right hon Friend the Foreign Secretary, and the Prime Minister, who are such very good judges of the temper of this House, must have known, in the course of that Debate, that the House was profoundly uneasy and anxious For all the good it did, so far as the Yalta Conference which succeeded it was concerned, we might as well have done absolutely nothing and spent the day in bed, because the views of the Commons House of Parliament were completely and utterly ignored

. . We felt ourselves obliged to put down this Amendment, which, broadly speaking, expresses our views. We did so with sorrow but with no misgiving at all, because this is no small moment in history. The Yalta Conference, it seems to me, is a curtain-raiser to the Peace Treaties that are to come, and on those Peace Treaties will depend the whole future of Europe and the world Is this curtain-raiser to be a grim, grisly *Grand Guignol* piece, followed perhaps by a happier and more joyous cavalcade, or is it to be the forerunner of another grim and hideous tragedy?

Commander Sir Archibald Southby (*Conservative*) : I beg to second the Amendment. . . . It seems to me that so momentous are the issues involved by the Yalta Agreement, that where an hon. Member is dissatisfied or apprehensive he must, before casting a vote or abstaining from voting tomorrow, either speak in the Debate, if that is possible, in order to justify his actions, or alternatively, put his name to some Amendment on the Order Paper, which would indicate the point of view he holds. That is why my name is on this Amendment. I do not have to remind the House that this Debate is, perhaps, the most important which has occured in our time. We must, of course, answer to our contemporaries for what we say and what we do during these three days, but it is at the bar of history that we shall really come up for judgment . . . Surely, in a matter so far-reaching as

this, Parliament should have been permitted to express its views free from the suggestion of coercion which is inherent in a three-line Whip and a Vote of Confidence. As it is, to-day we are, in fact, expressing our views under threat.

Outside this House people are confused by the flood of propaganda with which they are continuously assailed. They are asking, " Where is all this leading to ? To what are we being committed ? How will it affect our children ? " But is it any wonder they are perplexed ? They saw this war begin as a fight between dictatorship and democracy or, I should say, the democratic ideals of free men They have seen it develop, in one aspect at least, into a clash between two rival forms of dictatorship, Communism and Nazism, in neither of which way of thought is there any room for democratic freedom as we know it They find democracy in alliance with Communism in order to accomplish the overthrow of Nazism, and they fear and suspect—not without cause—the sacrifice of those democratic principles upon which alone man's freedom can be rooted and secured. I have studied the Report of the Crimea Conference with care, and it is not so much what is in the White Paper which justifies apprehension, as what remains undisclosed, even after the speech of my right hon. Friend the Prime Minister. . .

. . Those great men who signed the Report (of the Crimea Conference) declare their intention of enabling the liberated peoples of Europe

" to create democratic institutions of their own choice,"

and

" to build in co-operation with other peace-loving nations a world order under law, dedicated to peace, security, freedom and the general well-being of all mankind "

But one is bound to ask, Is that the case regarding Poland ? For make no mistake about it, our treatment of Poland is the touchstone by which our post-war relationships will be measured It is a tragic fact that the only place where the voice of free Poland and the Baltic Republics can be heard to-day is in this House of Commons. Why is it that in the Yalta Report there is not one single word regarding the Baltic Republics ? Are they not to be given the unfettered right to choose their own Government ? . .

. . . I cannot see, either in the contents of the White Paper, or in what the Prime Minister has said, anything which shakes my belief that no solution of the Polish problem has yet been reached to which my assent could honourably be given Incidentally, it is significant that nowhere in those portions of the White Paper dealing with liberated Europe and Poland do the words " justice " or " honour " occur.

. . . It is quite obvious that in order to safeguard her lines of communication while occupying Germany, Russia must continue to occupy part of Poland No one will deny that. But the information from Poland to-day makes it clear that under the Lublin Government the internal economy of Poland is now being irrevocably organised on Communist lines. In addition, officers and men of the Polish Army and underground forces are being confined in concentration camps. . . . The Foreign Secretary will not, I think, deny that in September, 1944, he was officially acquainted with the fact that since the occupation of part of Poland by Russia, from one district alone near Lublin, 21,000 officers and men of the Home Army had been placed under arrest. It is clear that there must be safeguards much more definite than anything which appears in the White Paper, if Poland is to be able to hold really free and unfettered elections in order to choose her own Government. Apart from the fact that the legal Government of Poland is here in London, how can a Polish Provisional Government,

as envisaged in the White Paper, be in fact established when the entire Press in Poland is under the control of the Moscow-sponsored Lublin Government, when people have no means of listening to free and independent broadcasts, and when no Pole in Poland is free to express a view except in one direction?

The White Paper says that only democratic and anti-Nazi parties may take part in the election, and put forward candidates What is the exact meaning of a qualification like that when, for example General Bór and members of the Polish underground forces, whose heroic struggle against the Germans in Warsaw will live for all time, are now accused of being pro-Nazi for no other reason than that they do not share the political views of those Poles and others who constitute the Lublin Government. I appreciate the grave complexity of the Polish problem, but I suggest that, instead of setting up a Provisional Government of National Unity as envisaged in the White Paper, it would be far better that both the legitimate Government here in London and the Lublin Government in Poland should surrender all their functions and authority to an international commission which should govern Poland until and during the elections, by which the Polish people would choose a Government for themselves This would constitute a definite guarantee that the elections would be free and unfettered.

But whether that course were followed or whether our Government insists upon the exceedingly doubtful procedure outlined in the White Paper, other Members of this House besides myself believe that the following seven requirements are essential if Poland is to receive from the Allies the just treatment which is her right. Firstly, that all deportations from the whole territory of Poland should now cease, that all Polish subjects who have either being deported from or who have left any part of Poland should be entitled to return as soon as possible, and that those who are in concentration camps should be released. Secondly, that any decree or such like which could prevent the free exercise of political rights should be rescinded, and that as a token of good faith there should be no exercise of influence by either Russian troops or civilians, and that the N K.V.D. should be withdrawn. Thirdly, that if the elections are to mean anything, then, subject, of course, to the military censorship necessary to preserve security until Germany is defeated, freedom of speech and of the Press and the right to hold meetings and to broadcast on the wireless should be restored at once. Fourthly, that only persons of Polish nationality—that is to say, people who were Polish subjects before September, 1939, or those who would have been entitled to political rights had the war not taken place—should be entitled to be candidates or to vote. Fifthly, that it is essential that the elections should be conducted under the supervision of a neutral, or alternatively, an inter-Allied, Commission, which should be established at once, and that from the time of such establishment order should be maintained by mixed garrisons of inter-Allied troops. Sixthly, that all the members of the armed forces of the Polish Republic serving outside Poland should be entitled to vote in the same way as our own British Forces will be entitled to vote in our own elections, either directly if that is possible or alternatively by postal ballot Lastly, that foreign Press correspondents should be admitted into Poland without delay, and without the imposition of any political restrictions. Those, I believe, are the minimum requirements if the Polish elections as envisaged in the Crimea Report are not to be a mockery.

In conclusion, I want to tell the House of an incident which is not without significance. Last week, a discussion took place in a certain British officers' mess. At the end of it a young and exceedingly brilliant officer said this:

" Of course, it is perfectly obvious that we have fought the war in vain: every principle for which we started the war has been sacrificed." I believe that what he said expresses the opinion of a growing number of the British people . . . If the mistakes of the past are to be forgiven and undone, and if a happy and peaceful world is to arise—not just a short period of peace, followed by another yet more terrible war—we dare not depart from the principles, whatever the temptation may be and no matter whence it comes . if our foreign policy is to be based upon expediency and not upon principles then it is bound to fail, and I cannot in honour express my confidence in it . . . I hold that there is a greater loyalty than that which we owe to any one man, Government or party—the loyalty to those fundamental ideals of justice, liberty and honour to uphold which we have twice in our lifetime seen the British sword drawn.

Major Lloyd (*Conservative*) . I am among those who have the honour, of which I am proud, to put my name to this Amendment. I believe that those of us who have signed that Amendment and have the opportunity of speaking on it to-day, represent an enormous number of ordinary folks in this country who are deeply disquieted at the particular references in the Yalta Agreement to Poland In spite of a spate of propaganda, which I suppose has never been exceeded in our history, and in spite of our diplomatic correspondents and special correspondents, who seem to have been able to get very much the same hand-out from the Public Relations Officers of the Departments concerned, they cannot concur with that portion of the agreement which refers to Poland. I look upon the intentions of the Yalta Agreement as downright annexation of a large portion of Poland's territory without the consent of her Government and, in fact, without the consent of her people I believe myself that it is a very definite breach of the Anglo-Russian Treaty. . . . I believe that it is a very definite moral breach of the Anglo-Polish Treaty, and I am quite certain that we have once and for all departed, with our eyes wide open from even the guidance of the Atlantic Charter, which has now been whittled down to a mere meaningless symbol. .

. . . I want to come to the question of the supersession—for it is supersession—of the legal Government of Poland, which we have recognised all these long years, by a prefabricated Government to be hand-picked by three estimable gentlemen It is in future to be recognised by all the three Great Powers concerned, and will supersede the legitimate Government of Poland which commands the Armed Forces of the Polish Republic. They have done splendidly throughout the war, and I firmly believe, still retain the overwhelming loyalty of the majority of the Polish people This prefabricated, Lublinised Government is to be the future Government of Poland I leave it at that. It is adding insult to injury not only to break our pledges to Poland but to compel the Polish people to accept a prefabricated Government of this type

I come to the all-important question of free elections. . . . this matter of free elections is vital. Are they to be held, as one presumes they will be, with the Red Army in occupation? What is far more important, are they to be held when the whole of every village and town in Poland is completely under the control and in the iron grip of the secret police? If they are, they can never be free.

After all, who are the people who are to be classified, apparently, as " Anti-Nazis " and ruled out? The Lublin Government, and those who think with them, appear to be willing and anxious to do their best to extirpate them The House may not have heard a radio appeal—if I can call it that—put out by the Prime Minister of the Government of Lublin the other day in which he said that it was necessary to extirpate the traitors, bandits,

incorrigible malefactors and brawlers of that Home Army, and also all the followers of the London Government. No doubt those who so heroically defended Warsaw, and the followers of the London Government—and they number hundreds of thousands, including more than 90 per cent of the Polish Armed Forces—will be called malefactors and brawlers, and treated accordingly Unfortunately, there is all too good reason to believe that many of these unfortunate people have already suffered greatly and gravely, and that some, indeed, have lost their lives.

The whole question resolves itself into whether it is the obvious intention to impose upon Poland a policy that can be checked by this new prefabricated Government. If it was possible for me to believe that this artificially appointed Government would over-rule the intense desire of the secret police to communise Poland, and the intense desire of the Lublin Government to communise Poland, I would not feel so strongly as I do to-day. But one must be sceptical

. . . We have no need to prolong indefinitely the arguments that could be brought forward in favour of this Amendment One of the reasons that influences me is this : I believe that we are the trustees of Poland, of this weak country which has done so much to help us in this war. We are her trustees, and we dare not let her down We are about to let her down, and that is an act of which I shall always be ashamed and in which I will not participate to-day. We are asked to underwrite something which I for one look upon as shameful

Captain Thorneycroft (*Conservative*) : I believe that the decisions which were arrived at at the Crimea Conference and, in particular, the decision relating to Poland, were wise decisions which were taken in circumstances of very considerable difficulty. As my hon. Friend the Member for Penryn and Falmouth (Mr Petherick) has said . . . although the Amendment refers to Poland this is not a Polish issue. The fact is that at the Crimea Conference three men, each of them the head of a great State . . . was laying down the future path we were likely to follow in our foreign affairs, and on the choice of that road hangs the issue as to whether, in another 20 years, we shall have another war or peace. . . .

Let me say at once to those Members who support this Amendment . Their desire is that these issues of foreign policy should be faced, and faced now. In that they represent a very widespread feeling in this country, and I share their view If we are to enter into another period in which the facts of a certain situation in foreign affairs are to be tortured to fit into some international document to which we have affixed our signature we shall enter upon a course which must eventually lead us to another war a war in which we shall have very few friends, and a process which will be detrimental to British honour.

As I have said, I differ from my hon. Friends in their conclusions. I do not believe that this Crimea Conference is the first milestone in the downward path. I do not believe that this Polish settlement is a betrayal of Poland or of British honour. Polish and British interests are to a large extent the same. We each have an interest to see that no one Power should dominate the whole of Europe But the first British interest that we have is to finish this war at the earliest possible date . . .

There is one other aspect of the war side I want to refer to, and this is a matter which could not be mentioned from the Front Bench but which can be mentioned from the back benches. It is that the German war is not the only war in which we are engaged We are faced with a long, arduous and probably costly campaign against the Japanese. We cannot compel the Russians to share the burden of that campaign, but if co-operation

means anything the greatest act of co-operation we could ask for would be for Russian co-operation in that war. It would save thousands of British lives and misery in thousands of homes, and we ought to watch that no words of ours will discourage the Russians in that matter. If our first interest is to conclude this war, the second is to see that another war does not happen, and to make sure that the territorial agreements we come to are honoured in future.

. Sympathy with Poland extends far beyond those who happen to call themselves friends of Poland, or even members of the Scottish Catholic Hierarchy. Sympathy with that country is based on the recognition of one gallant people for another We have both made sacrifices in this war; we have common interests I believe the settlement we have reached with regard to Poland is the best settlement we could have got. It is worth while remembering that in statesmanship and politics what counts is not the art of getting what is best, but the art of getting what is possible. I concede at once—and this may be embarrassing for the Government—that I do not regard the Polish settlement as an act of justice. It may be right or wrong, it may be wise or foolish, but at any rate it is not justice as I understand the term. It is not the sort of situation in which you get two parties to a dispute putting their case forward in front of a disinterested body and in which the strength and power of one of the parties is never allowed to weigh in the balance. The sooner we recognise that we are a long way from that sort of thing happening the better

The Government had two choices only They could have postponed this issue . . . They could have said, "No, we want this submitted to arbitration. We cannot do anything without the consent of the London Polish Government" No one knows what would happen in those circumstances, but one can safely say that it is unlikely that there would in any circumstances be a free, independent and democratic Poland. The Red Army is in occupation of that country and the Lublin Committee is in control. The policy which was advocated by the hon. and gallant Member for Berwick and Haddington and others to-day is a policy of inactivity and no more. The Poles could get nothing from it. . . .

The second course that they could adopt was to make the best settlement they could and impose it deliberately on the Poles. They have done that. They have bargained the Eastern frontier for the chance of a free Government of Poland within the new frontier. I could not quite follow my hon. Friend the member for Penryn and Falmouth when he criticised the appointment of a provisional Government by the Council of the three Ambassadors. It seems to me that some provisional Government is essential. Europe is not in a situation where it can hold free democratic elections Europe is on the brink of revolution You will have to have some provisional Government in order to attain the very points outlined by my hon. and gallant Friend the Member for Epsom (Sir A Southby). It seems to me that our policy in the past was mistaken. Up to date what we have done is this. We have encouraged the London Polish Government to negotiate, and have criticised them because they did not negotiate very well We have told them they must make concessions, and then we have blamed them because they did not make concessions I do not regard that as a sensible or an honourable course. I do not believe you can ask a Pole to decide to hand over a half of his country. I do not think it is a fair thing to ask any Pole to do. If they agree to do that, they would divide Poland for a generation, perhaps for all time, into those who thought they were patriots and those who thought they were traitors. That is to perpetuate civil war. Nor could you ask the Poles as an act of policy to take a large slice of their powerful neighbouring State. It is a

big decision to take from Germany the whole of East Prussia or the land up to the Oder. It is like taking Wales from England. That is the decision which must be taken by more powerful States I do not believe that you save your honour in this matter by imposing on others the obligation of making a decision which you ought to make yourself.

Major Lord Willoughby de Evesby (*Conservative*) . . . I cannot claim to speak with any very great knowledge or authority on foreign affairs. I have, however, during the past five years, been associated with men who fought, suffered and, alas, died for their country, and whose views, for that reason alone, although no better informed than my own, are entitled to a hearing here to-day

When I saw the Report of the Yalta Conference I did have a feeling of having been let down. I can only speak for myself personally, of course, but I cannot help feeling that many who were with me in the Army might have the same feeling. Perhaps I may attempt to give my reasons. On instructions from the War Office it was our habit, as many hon. Members know, to hold once a week what became known as A B.C.A. discussions. One of the most popular, and indeed, the most frequent of those discussions was the question of what we are fighting for.

We very soon realised that when you told the men they were fighting for freedom and democracy, it meant something rather different to each one of them . . But there was one thing about which we were all quite clear and all agreed, which was that we were fighting for Poland. When I say "Poland", I do not mean, and we did not mean, Poland as decreed by Soviet Russia or underwritten to-day by the British Government or Poland as imagined by the late Lord Curzon, but a Poland with similar frontiers to those we guaranteed, and over which we went to war at such very great cost in life and suffering—frontiers extended possibly at the expense of a defeated Germany I cannot help regretting that I shall be asked soon to approve of an agreement whereby the boundaries of Poland are to be radically altered from those which we pledged ourselves to preserve, an agreement embodying a settlement which we know is distasteful to those many heroic and gallant fellows who have fought for us on land, on sea and in the air during the past five years.

I must admit that I was very much relieved to hear the Prime Minister say that he was ready to see whether it was possible to have those Poles who fought for us, admitted into the British Empire I would ask whoever is to reply to the Debate to give us a more definite assurance We should make a gesture at this moment, and without any question of duty, offer safe asylum, either within our shores or within the British Empire, to those Poles who do not wish to go back to a dismembered and, to my mind, Sovietised Poland. I am reminded of a remark made by a Canadian soldier in France. During an engagement, one of the first tanks to go forward was hit by an 88mm. gun, and then the next was hit. Eventually the officer came along and asked this fellow what he was doing and why he was hanging back The Canadian replied · "There doesn't seem to be much future in it to me." I cannot help feeling that if many of these Poles who declared themselves, quite openly, in my presence, and that of many other people, as being more anti-Russian than anti-German, might have a better future within the British Empire than within this new Free State that we are now setting up.

I frankly admit that I am violently prejudiced on this question. I happen to have lived and trained during the past five years with the Polish Army. I have had Polish officers attached to my regiment, and I have often fought alongside the Polish Armoured Division. I can assure the House that a

more friendly, charming and co-operative body of men one could not find anywhere, or a more determined and courageous body among whom to fight. I have seen and heard only one side of the case. . . . I do find it hard, indeed impossible, to wed this Agreement with the Atlantic Charter Painstakingly, though possibly erroneously, I have tried to explain the matter to the men who were under my command. I tried to show earlier in my speech that the words " freedom " and " democracy " mean something slightly different to almost everyone I am afraid it is obvious that those two words have a very different meaning in Eastern Europe to what they have in Western Europe. The word " democracy " either as adjective or as noun appears more frequently than any other word in this part of the Conference Report, in so far as it deals with liberated Europe and Poland. It talks of·

" democratic principles . democratic means . . . democratic elements . . broader democratic basis . . free and unfettered elections," and so on. It would be disappointing and to my mind disastrous, after the long journeys which the Prime Minister undertook to get to the Crimea and all the hard work that was done, if we found that he, the President of the United States and Marshal Stalin were not all speaking exactly the same language. In fact, a slightly different definition was given to this word by all three of them

I realise as well as anyone that the future peace and prosperity, not only of our own country, but of Europe and the world, depend upon the co-operation between what are known as the " Big Three." But to my mind we cannot hope for true and lasting co-operation unless it is based on a real understanding and not on a sham, and to my mind to attempt to marry up this solution of the Polish problem, as my hon. and gallant Friend the Member for Stafford (Captain Thorneycroft) tried to do, and much else that has happened in Eastern Europe, and is still happening to-day in Eastern Europe, with the Atlantic Charter, is really nothing more than a sham

Mr. Raikes (*Conservative*) . The Prime Minister, when he called for a Vote of Confidence, made it abundantly plain that he wanted the Vote to show to the world that this House was behind him not simply in what he had done, but in the justice of what he had done Since then several speeches have been made. The most eloquent speech made on the Government side to-day was made by the hon and gallant Member for Stafford (Captain Thorneycroft) He did not base it on justice , with great honesty he said he thought it was an unjust settlement. The hon Member for West Leicester (Mr. H. Nicolson), in rather gentler language, agreed with him. One thing is certain—however great the Vote may be to-day, it will not be able to go out that all who voted for the Motion voted for it because they believe that the Motion was just.

The real issue on this Amendment is far wider than Poland. It is the issue of the good name of Britain among the nations of the world. Are we, in the attitude we are adopting at the present time, encouraging, as the result of the Yalta Agreement, the nations of Europe to say, as they have often said in the past, that Britain is the friend and hope of the weak ? That is the touchstone and test, and on that touchstone I propose to speak. The territorial issue of Poland and the independence of Poland are both matters which are interwoven with British honour. Much has been said upon the territorial boundaries, and I do not propose to deal with the question at any length. The Prime Minister, with a great flourish, assured the House yesterday that, after all, Poland would have been utterly destroyed if it had not been for Russia. I think his tone has been rather that of a man who regards Poland as a defeated country which has to get the best it can

after defeat. Did the Prime Minister and the Foreign Secretary, after a Polish guarantee had been given and when in August 1939, the Ribbentrop-Molotov Agreement had been made, turn to Poland and say " We are sorry, but in view of the fact that Germany and Russia have come together, total destruction is all you can hope for if you stand up to Germany, whatever the democracies may do " ? We know quite well that that was not the line and that that was not in their hearts at the time. It was in the heart and mind of every ordinary citizen in 1939-40 that, though Poland might fall, Poland would rise again, and we believed it long before Russia ever came into the picture It is a rather unjust argument to hurl at Poland now, after the days of 1939, that she would have been completely destroyed by the Germans and that, therefore, she ought to be grateful for what she can get to-day.

I come to the next point where I am rather shaken over Yalta. Whatever may have been the advantage or disadvantage of the territorial settlement, it seems astounding that, having as we had, a legitimate Polish Government in London, precisely recognised by the Foreign Secretary in a speech in December last year, that Government should not have had even one word of consultation, whether its advice were taken or not. I think I am right in saying that after the fall of Mr. Mikolajczyk, whose fall was deplored by the Prime Minister, neither Mr Arciszewski, the Prime Minister, nor the Foreign Secretary of the new Government have been permitted one word with either the Prime Minister or the Foreign Secretary of England. It seems to me that their treatment was a little ungenerous. It is a little hard that the legitimate Government should, as it were, have been put in cold storage while Yalta settled the fate of the Poles. . . .

So far as frontiers are concerned, say what you will, the Atlantic Charter was finally repudiated at Yalta. It started as a principle; it afterwards became a guide; to-morrow it will leave off becoming a guide and will become what Mr Ramsay MacDonald would have called a " gesture." We shall want something more than a gesture if a new Europe and a new world are to be built on the basis of civilisation and justice The Prime Minister said that the Curzon Line was a just line. The hon Member for West Leicester said it was a just line Apparently, however, they were dealing with two different lines. The line at Yalta was a line West of Lwów, and the line which the hon. Member for West Leicester was referring to was, apparently, a line which included Lwów When the Prime Minister said that it was the old day, I think he might at any rate have reminded the house that Eastern Galicia now goes to Russia, a province that has never been Russian at any time and was never contemplated in 1919, 1920 or 1921 as likely to become Russian.

The great danger in this new territorial settlement is—not that the old basis was of necessity a perfect settlement, as I think the Polish line did go too far to the East—that the line should have been settled in flat contradiction to treaties which have been made. The Treaty of Riga, in 1921, was reaffirmed in 1932 and I think in 1934, and of course was again reaffirmed in the Sikorski-Stalin agreement after Russia had come into the war. . . .

. . . In speech after speech since Teheran, the Prime Minister has said that he regarded the Curzon Line as necessary for Russian security. He has said it with firmness and vigour, and I am sure that he believes it What did he say yesterday? He said that the new Poland moving further West would have no great fear of danger from Germany, because drastic steps would be taken to prevent any offensive action by Germany for many years to come. If that is so, what have 180,000,000 Russians to

fear from 80,000,000 broken and disunited Germans? As regards Poland, it is therefore quite unnecessary for the Russians, except by friendly negotiation, to extend their land and to seek for "Naboth's vineyard" at the expense of a smaller neighbour.

I now turn to the question of independence. I agree that it is of more importance even than boundaries, unless the boundaries are so shrunk that they hamper independence. I think every one realises that the most significant thing proposed in regard to the future provisional Government of Poland is that they are to have what appears to be an extension of the present Government of Poland, with no reference to the London Government at all If that means anything, it surely means that the new Government of Poland will be based upon Lublin That is the view of Lublin. I venture to quote from the Lublin radio of 15th February After the Yalta proposals had come through, they welcomed them and said that the fact that the provisional Polish Government of national unity was to be based upon the present provisional Polish Government showed confidence in its present authority in Poland, since the London emigre Government had not even been mentioned. That was the reaction of Lublin What was the reaction of Moscow? The European service of "Red Star"—and, as we know, what any paper says in Moscow is the view of the Moscow Government more than what any paper says in London is the view of our own Government—said, on 16th February, through its commentator:

> "Roosevelt's personal representative stressed the democratic Government of Warsaw as the only Government of Poland, and on its basis the Provisional Polish Government of national unity will be formed, which will be recognised immediately by the Allied Powers"

We may be told by the Foreign Secretary, as I hope we shall be, that he does not propose to base the new Government upon Lublin, but I venture to suggest that there must have been misunderstanding at Yalta, if the Lublin Press and the Soviet Press have come to an erroneous conclusion that the basis of the new Government of Poland is to be Lublin The Prime Minister went further. He made one astounding statement. He said that the Poles in London should have been wise and taken the advice of the British Government a year ago, in which case there would have been no Lublin What does that mean? It means, as the Prime Minister knows and we all know, that Lublin is a fake and nothing more. Yet that fake, so far as we can read from Yalta—although there may be some safeguards—is supposed by both Lublin and Moscow to be the foundation of the new Government. . . .

Reference has been made to the decree which was pronounced by M. Bierut on 17th January outlawing the Polish Home Army and denouncing not only the Prime Minister of the Polish Government in London and General Bór-Komorovski as criminal adventurers, but dealing in a very rough-handed manner with M. Mikolajczyk. I should have thought that if at Yalta it was desired to get the support and the friendship of Poles both in this country and serving abroad, if there was one way in which that could have been assisted it would have been by the rescinding of that decree Are we to hear that perhaps it will be rescinded? I am sure the Foreign Secretary wishes it to be. But why has it not been rescinded? That is not all. Not only have these criticisms been passed in the Russian Press, but even since this Conference M Mikolajczyk himself has been held up to ridicule. I do not want to give too many quotations, but I think I ought to make one or two. There was a despatch from Lublin on 3rd January this year—this was before Yalta—from Henry Shapiro, a war correspondent. He said that there could be no question of compromise

between the two Governments, and that feeling was particularly bitter against ex-Premier Mikolajczyk, to whom the Lublin Poles were so anxious to offer the Premiership only three months ago. He was now considered to be a public enemy in the same class as General Sosnkowski. Premier Osubka said recent documents proving Mikolajczyk to have been responsible for cases of terrorism in liberated areas had been seized by the Lublin Government Not a very pleasant sort of party to join, even with a safeguard from the British Government to see that you get there That is not all. At the beginning of this year there was a Soviet communique dealing with the so-called Peasants' Congress in occupied Western Poland I quote only the final passage :

> " At the end of the session the Congress demanded the expulsion of the leaders of the emigre Government—Arciszewski, Mikolajczyk and others from Polish citizenship as traitors to the Polish nation."

It seems to me that they will be bold men who, until some safeguards are produced, will be prepared to go out to Poland. They will, indeed, unless certain safeguards are proposed and certain decrees are rescinded, be men who could almost be accused of wishful thinking. But this is no matter for jest.

The reason for this Amendment is that certain hon. Members of this House, of whom I am one, believe profoundly that, even though Great Britain might not be able at this stage to do much for Poland, we could do something more than underwrite a charter for Poland which, without proper safeguards, must be the end of Poland. The Prime Minister said in his speech that of course all parties will have free elections, except pro-Nazi and anti-democratic parties. I challenge him now : Can he name one pro-Nazi party in Poland ? If there is one country which, under suffering and misery, has kept its soul, it is Poland. We know so well that the Russian, and indeed the Lublin, definitions of " democracy " and " pro-Nazi " are rather different from ours Everybody with whom you disagree in Russia is a pro-Nazi or an anti-democrat In view of the fact that the new Polish Government however it is created, will be formed after consultations between the two Ambassadors and Mr. Molotov at Moscow, and will be formed with the background of this continued abuse of every known Polish leader and every great political party, whether it be the National Party or the Socialist Party, it seems rather unlikely that the old parties, and the supporters of these old parties, who have supported the underground movement, will be recognised as being either anti-Nazi or democratic. We have even had General Bor himself, the hero of Warsaw, described as a capitulating traitor in the pay of Berlin.

I do not think that the Prime Minister can feel surprised if, under these circumstances, we are inclined to say, " Would it not have been better not to have come to any agreement upon the final Eastern frontiers until the war was over, and the thing could have been settled at the Peace Conference ? Would it not have been better, instead of forming a Government which is bound to be formed, as Press cuttings alone show, in an atmosphere of fear and terrorism, to have had some inter-Allied Commission to carry on until the war was over, and the parties themselves could be properly supervised, and given an opportunity of free elections, under inter-Allied control, on the basis of the Saar plebiscite The only really fair international plebiscite we have seen for many years ? "

The Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Mr. Eden) : I must make it absolutely clear to the House that at every stage of this anxious Polish business, lasting as it has now done over almost the whole of the war period—and indeed starting from long before that—at any rate, so long as

this Government have handled it—all the decisions have been taken by the War Cabinet; and the responsibility is the responsibility of the War Cabinet. . . .

My hon Friend spoke of our relations with the Polish Government, and asked, was it true that I have not had direct contacts with the Polish Prime Minister or members of his Government? It is true that we have not had personal contacts with them, but it is also true that I have frequently seen the Ambassador who represents that Government. I have seen him, naturally, since I returned from the Crimea Perhaps I ought to add, as a matter of historical accuracy, that I had arranged an interview with the Polish Prime Minister and his Foreign Secretary just before we went to the Crimea, but an incident occurred, which will be fresh in the mind of the House—that we had a sudden and unexpected Greek Debate; and I, therefore, asked my Permanent Under-Secretary, Sir Alexander Cadogan, to see them instead. I think the House will accept it that there has not been any discourtesy on the part of His Majesty's Government I cannot, however, pretend that we have the same cordial relations with the present Polish Government as we had with the Government which preceded them, and which included, as, unhappily, this Government do not, all the main Polish parties represented in London

A word about the frontier itself My hon and gallant Friend the Member for Epsom (Sir A Southby) and others, including the mover of the Amendment, who raised this issue, always begin at the Treaty of Riga, but it is really completely unrealistic to begin this discussion at the Treaty of Riga I admit that it is true—there is no question of it—that the Soviet Government ultimately accepted the Treaty of Riga, but nobody with a knowledge of the history of those parts is going to contend that Russia was content with that solution, or, indeed, that we were content with that solution As the House knows, and as I have stated before, we more than once urged the Polish Government at the time not to extend their frontiers East beyond the Curzon Line, and for two years after the Treaty of Riga withheld our recognition of that arrangement.

. . . The Conference of Ambassadors made it clear that, in their recognition of the Riga frontier, two years after the Treaty had been signed, there was called for—put it this way—the setting-up of an autonomous regime in Eastern Galicia for ethnographical reasons. In point of fact, that autonomous regime was never set up . What happened was this . . As the Eastern Galicia area—which is the one, I think, in most dispute—was an area of mixed population, with Poles in the minority, the Poles sought to increase their own population in that area by bringing other Poles in, with the result that that, in its turn, led to friction. Further, there was the issue which, the House must bear in mind, underlies the whole of this frontier problem · the religious issue between the Roman Catholic elements and the Orthodox Church The religious difference in that area is far older than the national issue, and it is religion which lies at the root of much of the feeling on this issue.

I have explained before the basis on which the Curzon Line was delimited, but this at least can be accepted by everybody, whatever else we dispute—that east of the Curzon Line there are no areas where the Poles are in the majority except Wilno and Lwów, . I, therefore, say that when the Soviet Government say that they will accept the Curzon Line with certain adjustments, minor adjustments, but all in favour of Poland . I cannot stand at this Box and say that I regard that as a gross injustice to Poland. I would put this to my hon Friends. Are they absolutely convinced that the structure of the Polish State is strengthened by the

inclusion of large, or considerable, non-Polish elements in it? I wonder.

Mr. A. Bevan: On the West, too.?

Mr. Eden: The assumption in regard to the West is that the populations shall be removed. That is the whole basis In most cases, I can tell the hon. Gentleman they have gone already . I should have said that there were two weaknesses in the Polish State, as it existed before the war. One was these very considerable minority elements, who came frequently and made their complaints before the International Tribunal at Geneva, and the other was the Corridor .

May I ask them this? Which Poland would be stronger—the Poland with Wilno and with the Corridor as it was, or a Poland without Wilno and without the Corridor? . . . I believe it may still be found . . . that the new Poland, when so constituted, will be as strong as, or stronger than, the Poland that existed in 1939 That depends, of course, on how the agreement is carried out.

Therefore, I turn to that, and to the setting up of the new Government. I was asked . . why it was that, when we approached this problem in the Crimea, we did not make an end of the Lublin Government, as it were, " de-recognise " the Lublin Government and "de-recognise " the Government here, and start entirely afresh. Of course, that is an attractive suggestion, and it was, in fact, the point from which we started our examination of the matter, but this is the difficulty with which we were faced. The Russians said to us, and it is inescapable, that they must have some authority on their lines of communication through Poland Whether we like or dislike the Lublin Committee—and personally I say I dislike it —for the moment it is the authority which is functioning there in fulfilling the requirements of the Russian military authorities. What they said to us was, " We do not know how long it will take to form a new Polish Government, it may take weeks, it may take months." I do not know, either . . . During that time there could not be a vacuum in Poland, and so it is that we agreed, eventually, that, pending the creation of the new Government —and I beg the House to note that the phrase " new Government " occurs twice in the Declaration—the Soviet Government will continue to recognise the Lublin Government and we and the United States will continue to recognise the Government here. . .

The right hon. Member for Wakefield (Mr. Greenwood) yesterday complained that we had taken our decision, or come to our agreement, behind the back of the Polish Government As I understand his argument, it was that we ought to have summoned the Polish Government to our councils in Yalta when we reached a certain point in our discussions and talked matters over with them Of course, we thought of it. Let me therefore ask the right hon. Gentleman which Polish Government were we to summon? Were we to summon the Lublin Government, for both we and the United States Government hold that that Government is not fully representative of the Polish people? Or were we to summon the Government here in London, which the Soviet Government hold is not representative of the Polish people? Or were we to summon both Governments? . . . We could not bring them all to Yalta; if we had done, no doubt we should still be there. It was impossible to do that, and so we decided to appoint this Commission to carry through the task for us. . . Is it our desire that Poland should be really and truly free? Yes, certainly, most certainly it is. In examining that Government, if and when it is brought together, it will be for us and our Allies to decide whether that Government is really and truly, as far as we can judge, representative of the Polish people. Our recognition must depend upon that. We would

not recognise a Government which we did not think representative The addition of one or two Ministers would not meet our views It must be, or as far as it can be made, representative of the Polish parties as they are known, and include representative national Polish figures. That is what we mean There is only one consideration—I do not think we could call it more than that—that we would ask of the new Polish Government, that is that they would enter into a treaty of friendship and alliance with Russia. I do not think that anybody would think that unreasonable because at the same time that Government would have treaties of friendship and alliance with us and the French Government

The second question was, do we favour the establishment of machinery for Allied supervision of elections? That was a question which was also discussed. The Greek Government have asked for such supervision. . It may be, if and when this new Polish Government is formed, that they will also ask for international supervision. I hope so If they do then we shall certainly be prepared to join in it. . . . I must repeat and make plain exactly the position about recognition. I hold the House out no pledge No one can be certain how it is going to work out, but we hope that the discussions in Moscow will be attended by representative Poles from inside Poland and from outside Poland and that as a result of those conversations a thoroughly representative Polish Government will come into being. If it does and if it is, in the words of the communique, " properly constituted," then we and our Allies will recognise that government as the provisional government of Poland—provisional until the elections take place. If it does not come into being then we remain as we are to-day, we and the United States recognising the Government in London and the Soviet Government recognising, I presume, the Government in Lublin

. . . I come to a criticism made by my hon. Friend the Member for Penryn and Falmouth (Mr. Petherick) who maintained that, in the course which we have jointly agreed, we have in some way violated the Anglo-Polish Agreement of 1939, and he referred to a secret Protocol in this connection I can assure my hon. Friend that his fears are entirely unfounded. There is nothing in the Anglo-Polish Treaty, or in any other document, which guarantees the frontiers of Poland The Government of 1939 gave the House, of course, full information about the Treaty but, quite rightly, they went further than this and made clear the effect of the secret Protocol from which my hon. Friend quoted. I must read to the House the reply given . . . to a Parliamentary Question on the 19th October, 1939, asking whether the references to aggression by a European Power in the Anglo-Polish Agreement were intended to cover the case of aggression by Powers other than Germany including Russia, and my right hon. Friend replied.

> " No, Sir. During the negotiations which led up to the signature of the agreement, it was understood between the Polish Government and His Majesty's Government that the agreement should only cover the case of aggression by Germany, and the Polish Government confirm that this is so "

That is the exact position of the Agreement. There was no question whatever of any engagement having been made about the Eastern frontiers at that time or at any other time.

Mr. Petherick: May I interrupt the right hon Gentleman? He is referring only to the main Treaty of mutual assistance I asked about a Protocol of which I read out an extract and it was perfectly plain I will do it again if he likes Clause 3 of the secret Protocol says:

> " The undertakings mentioned in Article 6 of the agreement, should

they be entered into by one of the contracting parties with a third State "—shall we say Russia or some other State?—

" would of necessity be so framed that their execution should at no time prejudice either the sovereignty or territorial inviolability of the other contracting parties "

Mr. Eden: . . . My hon. Friend did not tell me he was going to read out from a secret document but, naturally, as he did so, I have looked it up, and I have seen exactly what the position is. I can assure my hon. Friend . . . that the answer I have just given was precisely intended to cover that secret Protocol. I can assure him there is no catch about the matter at all, and that what that Clause refers to, if he will look back, is to Article 3 of the agreement which refers to certain undertakings that might in the future be made——

Mr. Petherick: I am extremely sorry, but Clause 3 says " undertakings mentioned in Article 6." Nothing could be more specific.

Mr. Eden: I beg the hon. Gentleman's pardon, but I have taken the trouble to look this matter up since he raised it. I was not even a member of the Government then, but I consulted those who were. I have consulted my legal advisers, and in their judgment, and in the judgment of those concerned at the time, the effect of this secret Protocol was to limit —precisely to limit—the obligations put before the House, not to increase them.

Mr. McGovern (*Independent*): . . . There is, further, the question of Poland. . . . We are told we must not, on any occasion, doubt the word of Marshal Stalin, or the word of the Prime Minister, or the word of the President of the United States. This is not, however, a mutual admiration society; we are not collected here to pass compliments to one another. Members of the House can talk as glibly as they like on the Floor or in the Press, but the great bulk of opinion in this country does not believe that the Polish plan will be carried out in a decent and democratic manner. I would be enthusiastic if there were a coming-together of Russia, Poland, Germany and France, and if they were prepared to work with one another in a decent atmosphere, but, with the deportation of millions of Poles, and the putting to death of a large number of Polish politicians and trade union leaders, and of every individual who does not subscribe to the totalitarian ideas of Marshal Stalin, I have grave doubts about the carrying out of this democratic plebiscite. I have seen these democratic plebiscites carried out before. I have also seen attempts made from time to time to involve people in a decision which is made to appear as if unity prevails. A plan is decided upon before you get to the meeting, and everybody has to be black-balled into submission or dubbed as traitors or dishonest.

. . . At one time the right hon. Gentleman the Deputy Prime Minister and the Leaders of the Labour Party were on the show-grounds of Moscow and other Russian cities, and the people threw balls at them as the social Fascists of Great Britain.

The Deputy Prime Minister (Mr. Attlee): Does the hon. Member suggest that I was there?

Mr. McGovern: Not in person. The right hon. Gentleman was there, but he did not know it. He was an effigy. That was at the time when the Communist Party wandered into the Labour Party and tried to catch them. At that time they had these figures in the show-grounds in Moscow, and the children were taught to make dollies of the British Labour and trade union leaders, who were regarded as the social Fascists of Great Britain and Hitler's pals. I see these changes taking place. Now they want to woo you. It is a change of tactics, just as Stalin's approach to the Polish

issue is a change of tactics. The Prime Minister and the President of the United States would not admit that they were compelled to accept the decision because their pride would not let them do otherwise. The fact is, however, that they found an accomplished fact in Poland. Marshal Stalin had created the Lublin Committee, and he backs it every inch of the way, because it is his Committee and his Government. He created it and he is determined that it will operate. There will be further deportations and murders until he carries his way in the plebiscite. I wish it were otherwise, but I cannot see it as anything other than that. . .

This Yalta Agreement is more important for the things it does not say, than for the things it does say It presents, like the Atlantic Charter and the Teheran decisions, a jumble of words with no meaning or reality to any individual who is politically honest.

Mr. Rhys Davies (Westhoughton) . . I do not want to dwell unduly on Poland, but hon Members have dealt with only the Eastern side of Poland; I want to say something about the Western side. As it happens, I have been in Danzig, the Corridor, Silesia and Poland, and know just a little about that part of the world.

The first thing I want to say about the Polish question is this. I was really amazed yesterday at what came from the Foreign Secretary about the Polish situation The right hon. Gentleman said, in effect, that Poland was a ramshackle state in 1939 How on earth came it about, therefore, that the British Government could give a promise to defend the independence of a ramshackle State like that? The second thing that astonished me was—and I am sure the people of this country have been deceived in regard to Poland—that the only guarantee we gave to Poland for its independence was in the event of an attack on Poland by Germany. It did not matter if Russia, or any other Power, attacked her. It was, in effect and I hope I am not being too biassed, an invitation to Poland to stand up to Germany in order to wage a war on Russia The right hon. Gentleman the Foreign Secretary made another statement that, generally, the avowed policy of this country for centuries was that no great Power should be allowed to rise in Europe to challenge the liberty of the European peoples, If that is our policy, let me say that the next generation of people in this country have got to be prepared for a war on Russia, because it will be the next State to be involved in that policy of balance of power

. . . Whatever views may be held about the war—and there are many —one thing is certain This war does not differ in its progress from any other war—there have been over 500 wars waged in the course of history—and we started this war with great motives and high ideals, and we published the Atlantic Charter and then spat on it and stamped on it and burnt it, as it were, at the stake, and nothing is left of it. Hon. Members know this very well, and I want once more to enter a protest. . . . It was believed that this country went to war for high motives and the independence of Poland. I shall not be a bit surprised when this war is over if it is found that this war has been waged by Great Britain and the United States of America deliberately in order to destroy the industrial capacity of Japan and Germany.

Mr. Pickthorn (*Conservative*) . I should like to say a word first of all about the curious coincidence of—is it four or five independent Members who have chivalrously rushed to the assistance of His Majesty's Government upon this occasion? I am not quite sure what would have happened to them in Poland or Yugoslavia. They do not appear to me to be Members of recognised democratic parties, and it seems to me a little queer that they feel so safe here that they do not mind the rule elsewhere that persons

conducting elections should decide which party is going to participate in them and which not. They do not seem to mind that rule spreading over Europe, they seem to be perfectly confident that it will not reach England, or, if it does reach England, at any rate it will not reach the Midlands . . My right hon Friend the Deputy Prime Minister told us that he wished to put the Polish question in the general framework of Europe . He proceeded to tell us the principles on which he was going to put it in the general framework of Europe, and I was astounded, not at those principles, but at the avowal of them In this world's history there have often before been men who preferred to arrange the present with no reference to the past—if I might quote my right hon Friend's words, I think exactly—

" in the light of the future, and from the point of view of the people of the future "

Though there have been people who have tried to do that often enough before, it has never produced anything but extreme disaster. However, this is the first occasion in history, I think, upon which a gentleman occupying so elevated a situation as that has avowed that preposterous principle—we are to try to arrange Eastern Europe not in the light of the past but in the light of the future, and from the point of view of the people of the future An Hon. Member " Why not ? " Because the light of the future is not here yet. That is why we cannot use it. My right hon. Friend also made great play with the argument, which has been frequently used by all the supporters of His Majesty's Government on this occasion, that the only chance of peace is that we three should stay together That really is a meaningless statement Of course it is true. You might as well say that if you threw my right hon. Friend into the Thames, he would be wetter.

. . . I have only one other piece of hastily fetched foreign information, about which I would like to ask my right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary a question. I take no responsibility for this, but as a statement I think it has enough evidence that makes it fair to ask the question, which is this Is it true that Madame Arciszewski, the wife of the Prime Minister of the Polish Government, recognised by His Britannic Majesty's Government, has been arrested ? . . .

. . . The essential thing about this Yalta Agreement on Poland seems to be not whether it is the best arrangement which could possibly be made at that time That still begs the question For instance, we were told yesterday that this and that had happened because of the existence of the Lublin Committee. But His Majesty's Government were not wholly without influence in the days before that Committee came into existence There are all sorts of things which we do not know about as to what relations were between His Majesty's Government and the Soviet Government The main point is this : This thing is presented to us as the first step towards a great new world organisation. . . .

. . . I am, perhaps, over-suspicious about great world organisations, but I feel sure that such an organisation can be built up only by taking up all that there was in the modern world of international law and international comity, and building as from that It seems to me that, however much this may be much the best arrangement, and however much it may be said that the Poles may be idiots for wanting to keep their old provinces or for not wanting to have chunks of Germany, what sticks in my gizzard, what I find it impossible to give positive approval to, is that so far as I know it is the first time in history that one country has had both its *regime* and its boundaries altered in the course of a war by three other nations—all in

alliance with it, or at least, two of them are in alliance in every sense of the word, and the third is in alliance in one sense or another—without that country being present. It may be that that was necessary. It may be that at the point we reached in January, 1945, which, judging by the Prime Minister's speech in October, was a point very different from that which we reached three months sooner, this was the best and only thing to do. But to say that it should be done with candles, bells, flags, ribbons, rejoicings, and jigs, because this is the way to start building a new world organisation, to say that is too much with which to face every Member as has been done by the demanding and the advocacy of this Vote of Confidence. Therefore, with the utmost reluctance, I find myself unable to give that Vote . . . We have not been the ones who, if our war machinery has been proved to be a death-trap, if our ships have been sunk, or the battle has swayed the wrong way, or a great Ally has thought that a second front ought to be opened at a point of time when to do such a thing would have been a certain way of losing the war, have asked awkward questions and have gone into the wrong lobbies on those occasions.

I ask the Government, before they repeat this experiment what happens if this goes wrong? I am all for it going as right as it stands, but supposing it goes wrong? Suppose it becomes plain within the next six weeks or six months that there was never any real chance of getting any real expression of opinion or independence of provisional Government in Poland It is certainly going to be difficult. Anyone who listens to the Lublin wireless will know that you are not allowed to have a typewriter, or listen to any wireless except at a communal listening point. All parties and papers are strictly controlled We have been trying for 18 months to settle on a way to have a general election in this country, and we have not yet brought it off and, when it does come, we know that it will be a sweepstake . . From Lublin information alone we know that it is almost inconceivably difficult to arrange anything like a real election there

Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Mr. Eden): The hon. Gentleman the Member for Newcastle-under-Lyme (Mr. Mack) asked whether facilities are now to be given to the representatives of the Lublin Government to have contact with Polish seamen here, just as the representatives of the London Government have contact with them. The answer is, "No." We have in no sense recognised the Lublin Committee and, may I add, we have no intention of recognising the Lublin Committee. We do not regard it as representative of Poland at all. When my right hon. Friend and I met the representatives of this Committee in Moscow, I must say that they did not make a favourable impression upon us. There is no question, and the House need not be anxious that there is any question, of our affording recognition to them—not at all I hoped that I had made that clear yesterday, but from some of the comments in the Debate, I am not sure that I did. It does not surprise me to hear, for instance, as I was told in this Debate, that the Lublin Radio is pouring out streams of contentious stuff I have no doubt what the Committee wants. Their purpose is to maintain the position they already hold; but that is not what we want, nor is it what the Yalta Conference decided upon. The Foreign Secretary of Soviet Russia and the Ambassadors are now beginning discussions in Moscow, and we shall see whether a broadly representative Polish Government can be created. If it can be created, and if we are satisfied that it is representative, then and only then will we and the United States Government recognise it If it cannot be created, we shall stay as we are . . . We have recognised this Government in London, which has gone through many changes. We will continue to recognise it until a new Government is

created—if it is created—as a result of the conversations in Moscow, and provided it can be regarded as broadly representative of the Polish people I received a message a short while ago of the reported arrest of the wife of the present Polish Prime Minister in London and a certain number of people working with her in the Red Cross . . She is reported to have been arrested in Poland. I have had no report about that except a message just before I came to the House, from the Polish Ambassador in London. Of course, we shall take that matter up, not with the Lublin Committee which we do not recognise, but with the Soviet Government. . .

My hon. Friend the Member for Cambridge University and others who have been a little critical again to-day—and I must reply to them—really have not told us what alternative course we ought to pursue What they have said is, 'We do not think you ought to have got into this position.' Let me assure the House that we did not want to get into this position It was because we did not wish to arrive at this position that, a long time ago, my right hon. Friend and I began our efforts—the moment when Polish-Russian relations were broken off—to try to restore them. I repeat what the Prime Minister said, that if little more than a year ago the Polish Government had felt able to come to a decision about the frontier position in the East, I am quite certain it would have been possible for us to make arrangements with our Allies whereby that Government would now be in Warsaw with Mr Mikolajczyk as its Prime Minister. It is just because we feared this present situation was going to arise that we made those efforts. Faced with that situation, neither my hon Friend, nor anyone else in this Debate, has told us of any course we could pursue, except to sit still and take no action at all.

DOCUMENTS

AGREEMENT OF MUTUAL ASSISTANCE BETWEEN THE UNITED KINGDOM AND POLAND

London, August 25th, 1939.

ARTICLE 1

Should one of the Contracting Parties become engaged in hostilities with a European Power in consequence of aggression by the latter against that Contracting Party, the other Contracting Party will at once give the Contracting Party engaged in hostilities all the support and assistance in its power.

ARTICLE 2

(1) The provisions of Article 1 will also apply in the event of any action by a European Power which clearly threatened, directly or indirectly, the independence of one of the Contracting Parties, and was of such a nature that the Party in question considered it vital to resist it with its armed forces.

(2) Should one of the Contracting Parties become engaged in hostilities with a European Power in consequence of action by that Power which threatened the independence or neutrality of another European State in

such a way as to constitute a clear menace to the security of that Contracting Party, the provisions of Article 1 will apply, without prejudice, however, to the rights of the other European State concerned.

ARTICLE 3.

Should a European Power attempt to undermine the independence of one of the Contracting Parties by processes of economic penetration or in any other way, the Contracting Parties will support each other in resistance to such attempts. Should the European Power concerned thereupon embark on hostilities against one of the Contracting Parties, the provision of Article 1 will apply

ARTICLE 4.

The methods of applying the undertakings of mutual assistance provided for by the present Agreement are established between the competent naval, military and air authorities of the Contracting Parties.

ARTICLE 5.

Without prejudice to the foregoing undertakings of the Contracting Parties to give each other mutual support and assistance immediately on the outbreak of hostilities, they will exchange complete and speedy information concerning any development which might threaten their independence and, in particular, concerning any development which threatened to call the said undertakings into operation.

ARTICLE 6.

(1) The Contracting Parties will communicate to each other the terms of any undertakings of assistance against aggression which they have already given or may in future give to other States.

(2) Should either of the Contracting Parties intend to give such an undertaking after the coming into force of the present Agreement, the other Contracting Party shall, in order to ensure the proper functioning of the Agreement, be informed thereof.

(3) Any new undertaking which the Contracting Parties may enter into in future shall neither limit their obligations under the present Agreement nor indirectly create new obligations between the Contracting Party not participating in these undertakings and the third State concerned.

ARTICLE 7.

Should the Contracting Parties be engaged in hostilities in consequence of the application of the present Agreement, they will not conclude an armistice or treaty of peace except by mutual agreement.

ARTICLE 8.

(1) The present Agreement shall remain in force for a period of five years.

(2) Unless denounced six months before the expiry of this period it shall continue in force, each Contracting Party having thereafter the right to denounce it at any time by giving six months' notice to that effect.

(3) The present Agreement shall come into force on signature.

PROTOCOL

The Polish Government and the Government of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland are agreed upon the following interpretation of the Agreement of Mutual Assistance signed this day as alone authentic and binding .—

1.—(*a*) By the expression "a European Power" employed in the Agreement is to be understood Germany.

(*b*) In the event of action within the meaning of Articles 1 or 2 of the Agreement by a European Power other than Germany, the Contracting Parties will consult together on the measures to be taken in common.

2.—(*a*) The two Governments will from time to time determine by mutual agreement the hypothetical cases of action by Germany coming within the ambit of Article 2 of the Agreement.

(*b*) Until such time as the two Governments have agreed to modify the following provisions of this paragraph, they will consider · that the case contemplated by paragraph (1) of Article 2 of the Agreement is that of the Free City of Danzig ; and that the cases contemplated by paragraph (2) of Article 2 are Belgium, Holland, Lithuania.

(*c*) Latvia and Estonia shall be regarded by the two Governments as included in the list of countries contemplated by paragraph (2) of Article 2 from the moment that an undertaking of mutual assistance between the United Kingdom and a third State covering those two countries enters into force

(*d*) As regards Roumania, the Government of the United Kingdom refers to the guarantee which it has given to that country , and the Polish Government refers to the reciprocal undertakings of the Roumano-Polish alliance which Poland has never regarded as incompatible with her traditional friendship for Hungary.

3. The Undertakings mentioned in Article 6 of the Agreement, should they be entered into by one of the Contracting Parties with a third State, would of necessity be so framed that their execution should at no time prejudice either the sovereignty or territorial inviolability of the other Contracting Party.

4 The present protocol constitutes an integral part of the Agreement signed this day, the scope of which it does not exceed.

(—) HALIFAX.
(—) RACZYNSKI.

MILITARY AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE POLISH HIGH COMMAND AND THE SOVIET HIGH COMMAND.

1. The military agreement derives naturally from the political agreement of July 30, 1941

2 A Polish army will be organized in the shortest possible time on the territory of the U S S.R., wherefore ·

a) it will form part of the armed forces of the sovereign Republic of Poland,
b) the soldiers of this army will take the oath of allegiance to the Republic of Poland,
c) it will be destined with the Armed Forces of the U.S.S.R. and other Allied States for the common fight against Germany,
d) after the end of the war, it will return to Poland,
e) during the entire period of common operations, it will be subordinated operationally to the High Command of the U S S.R In respect of organization and personnel it will remain under the authority of the Commander-in-Chief of the Polish Armed Forces, who will coordinate the orders and regulations concerning organization and personnel with the High Command of the U S.S.R. through the Commander of the Polish Army on the territory of the U S S R.

3 The Commander of the Polish Army on the territory of the U.S.S.R will be appointed by the Commander-in-Chief of the Polish Armed Forces ;

the candidate for this appointment to be approved by the Government of the U S S.R

4 The Polish Army on the territory of the U.S.S.R. will consist of units of land forces only Their strength and number will depend on manpower, equipment and supplies available.

5. Conscripts and volunteers, having previously served in the Polish Air Force and Navy, will be sent to Great Britain to complement the establishments of the respective Polish services already existing there

6 The formation of Polish units will be carried out in localities indicated by the High Command of the U.S S.R. Officers and other ranks will be called from among Polish citizens on the territory of the U.S.S R, by conscription and voluntary enlistment Draft boards will be established with the participation of U.S S R authorities in localities indicated by them.

7. Polish units will be moved to the front only after they are fully ready for action. In principle they will operate in groups not smaller than divisions and will be used in accordance with the operational plans of the High Command of the U S.S R.

8. All soldiers of the Polish Army on the territory of the U.S.S R. will be subject to Polish military laws and decrees.

Polish military courts will be established in the units for dealing with military offences and crimes against the establishment, the safety, the routine or the discipline of the Polish Army

For crimes against the State, soldiers of the Polish Army on the territory of the U S.S R will be answerable to the military courts of the U S.S.R.

9 The organization and war equipment of the Polish units will as far as possible correspond to the standards established for the Polish Army in Great Britain.

The colors and insignia of the various services and military rank will correspond exactly to those established for the Polish Army in Great Britain.

10. The pay, rations, maintenance and other material problems will be in accordance with regulations of the U.S.S.R

11. The sick and wounded soldiers of the Polish Army will receive treatment in hospitals and sanatoria on an equal basis with the soldiers of, the U.S.S.R and be entitled to pensions and allowances.

12. Armament, equipment, uniforms, motor transport, etc, will be provided as far as possible by

a) the Government of the U S S R from their own resources,
b) the Polish Government from supplies granted on the basis of the Lend-Lease Act (an Act to promote the defense of the United States approved March 11, 1941)

In this case, the Government of the U S S R will extend all possible transportation facilities

13. Expenditures connected with the organization, equipment and maintenance of the Polish Army on the territory of the U.S.S R. will be met from credits provided by the Government of the U S S.R., to be refunded by the Polish Government after the end of the war.

14-16. Liaison, etc.

Plenipotentiary of the Polish High Command.

SZYSZKO BOHUSZ.
Brigadier General.

Plenipotentiary of the High Command of the U.S.S.R.

WASSILEWSKIJ.
Major General.

Moscow, August 14, 1941.

EXCERPTS FROM THE SOVIET NOTES OF JANUARY 23, 1942, AND JANUARY 11, 1943, TO THE POLISH GOVERNMENT, IN WHICH THEY REFUSED TO RELEASE THOSE POLES WHO, CONSCRIPTED TO THE GERMAN ARMY HAD BEEN TAKEN AS PRISONERS OF WAR, FOR SERVICE IN THE POLISH ARMY—IN REPLY TO THE POLISH NOTES OF NOVEMBER 8, 1941, JANUARY 7, 1942, JANUARY 18, 1942, FEBRUARY 6, 1942, AND DECEMBER 15, 1942.

. . . The People's Commissariat considers itself obliged to declare that it cannot agree to the Polish Government's proposal and that it sees no grounds for adopting any regime for German prisoners of war of Polish nationality other than the regime established for all German prisoners of war. (January 23, 1942)

. . . The Soviet Government cannot see any reason to reconsider their decision. (January 11, 1943)

EXCERPTS FROM THE NOTE OF OCTOBER 13, 1941, FROM THE POLISH AMBASSADOR IN MOSCOW TO VYSHINSKY, DEPUTY PEOPLE'S COMMISSAR FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS, DRAWING ATTENTION TO THE INCOMPLETE FULFILMENT OF SOVIET OBLIGATIONS CONCERNING POLISH CITIZENS, UNDER THE AGREEMENT OF JULY 30, 1941

. . . During my conversation with you, Mr. Commissar, on September 20, I received your assurance that the Soviet authorities would take care that Polish citizens detained in distant Northern regions, where the climate is unsuitable for Poles, were transported to more suitable districts before the winter season set in. During my conversation on October 7, I quoted figures relating to Polish citizens who were still detained in large numbers in camps and mentioned the fact that certain categories among them had been transferred to very remote Northern regions In spite of repeated Polish requests and the assurances given on behalf of the Soviets,, this Embassy has not as yet received the list of localities nor the exact numbers of Polish citizens released

Contrary to the assurances that except for a small number of individuals suspected, indicted or convicted of espionage on behalf of Germany, whose names and dossiers up to now have not been communicated to the Embassy, all Polish citizens had been set free and that in a small number of cases only was delay caused by purely technical considerations, the Embassy is in possession of information that there are still in a number of prisons and camps thousands of Polish citizens who were not informed of the Agreement concluded on July 30, 1941, or were informed that the provisions of this Agreement and of the Decree of the Praesidium of the Supreme Council of the U S.S.R. of August 12 did not apply to them.

By way of example, may I state that Polish citizens are still being detained in prison at Saratov, Gorki, Balashov, Tschelabinsk, Kizel and in compulsory labour camps in the Primorski Kray in the North-Eastern extremity of the Yakut district (near the mouth of the Kolyma on the Arctic Ocean), near Aldan, in the region of Tomsk, Karaganda, in the mines of Karabash (Tschelabinsk district), in the Ivgiel camp (Sverdlovsk district), in the Archangel district and in the Republic of Komi, along the railway line under construction between Kotlas and Pechora and at other points

More detailed information concerning the numbers and conditions of these Polish citizens is given in the Annex to the present Note. As will be seen therefrom the local authorities either did not receive detailed orders concerning the treatment of Polish citizens after the conclusion of the

Agreement of July 30, or, in some cases, the local authorities were content to deal with the matter in a purely *pro forma* way, or with a partial execution of the orders issued It is to be assumed that various considerations have dictated this treatment and in some instances local authorities may have desired to secure for themselves virtually unpaid man-power, whence the tendency to release sometimes elderly, invalid or ailing persons, while the stronger and healthier are retained for compulsory labour.

. . . I also venture to draw your attention, Mr Commissar, to the fact that the organization of the Polish Army in the U S.S.R. is not progressing in accordance with the letter and spirit of the Agreement of July 30, 1941, or with the intentions of the two Governments.

The Supreme Command of the Polish armed forces in the U.S.S.R has vainly waited four weeks for a decision on the formation of further Polish divisions and the designation of the localities in which this formation is to take place. In consequence, numerous Polish citizens reporting for military service and rallying en masse to the Polish army stream into the two already overcrowded camps, which lack the necessary number of tents, adequate food supplies and medicines. Thus a situation, harmful alike to the troops and to the common cause, is being created The local administrative authorities very often do not carry out the instructions issued by the central authorities with regard to questions concerning the Polish Army and create new additional difficulties, as for instance by declining to release from prisons and camps all Polish citizens, military and reservists, and in many instances by detaining the more physically fit elements, which reduces the military value of the units already formed Moreover, considerable numbers of Polish citizens enrolled in the Red Army and subsequently transferred to the so-called labour battalions have not up till now been directed to the Polish Army.

EXCERPT OF THE NOTE OF OCTOBER 15, 1941, FROM GENERAL WLADYSLAW SIKORSKI TO AMBASSADOR BOGOMOLOV, IN LONDON, CONCERNING THE FAILURE TO RELEASE A CERTAIN NUMBER OF POLISH OFFICERS FROM SOVIET PRISONER OF WAR CAMPS.

May I request Your Excellency to convey to the Soviet Government the assurance that the Polish Government appreciates the good will shown by the Soviet Government in carrying out the Polish-Soviet Agreement of July 30, 1941. However, certain difficulties have become apparent which do not seem to have any connection with those arising from military operations. Thus the immediate release of Polish citizens deprived of their freedom appears necessary in view of the approaching winter, as well as means of assuring their existence The fate of several thousand Polish officers who have not returned to Poland and who have not been found in Soviet military camps, continues to remain uncertain. They are probably dispersed in the Northern districts of the U.S S R. Their presence in Polish Army camps is indispensable.

May I also request Your Excellency to draw the attention of the Soviet Government to the necessity of increasing the aid essential to the formation and development of this Army.

EXCERPT OF THE NOTE OF NOVEMBER 14, 1941, FROM AMBASSADOR BOGOMOLOV TO GENERAL SIKORSKI, IN REPLY TO THE NOTE OF OCTOBER 16, 1941.

In reply to your Note of October 16, 1941, I am instructed by the Soviet Government to inform you, Mr. Prime Minister, that all Polish citizens to

be set free in accordance with the Decree of the Presidium of the Supreme Council of the U S.S.R. of August 12, 1941, have been set free, and certain specified categories of those released have received material help from the Soviet Authorities (free passes for railway and waterway travel, subsistence allowances during their journeys, etc). All Polish citizens released and not called up by the Polish Army are given an opportunity to work on conditions identical to those enjoyed by Soviet citizens and this without any special obligation whatsoever on the part of the Government of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

All Polish officers on the territory of the U S.S R have also been set free. Your supposition, Mr. Prime Minister, that a large number of Polish officers are dispersed throughout the Northern regions of the U.S.S.R is obviously based on inaccurate information

EXCERPT FROM THE NOTE OF JANUARY 5, 1942, FROM THE PEOPLE'S COMMISSARIAT FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS, CONCERNING THE SOVIET TERRITORIAL CLAIMS.

. . . The assertion of the Embassy that the law concerning citizenship of the U.S.S R. of August 19, 1938, could not be applied to the territories of Western Ukraine and Western White Ruthenia in the period between the middle of September 1939 and the middle of July 1941, as this would be incompatible with the provisions of the IVth Hague Convention of 1907, is incorrect The provisions of the IVth Hague Convention of 1907, which the Embassy evidently has in view, refer to the regime of occupation on enemy territory, whereas the assertion of " occupation " in respect to Western Ukraine and Western White Ruthenia is, in this case, devoid of all foundation, alike from the political as from the international point of view, because the entrance of the Soviet forces into Western Ukraine and Western White Ruthenia in the autumn of 1939 was not an occupation but an attachment of the districts mentioned to the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics as the result of the freely expressed will of the population of those districts.

EXCERPT FROM THE NOTE OF JANUARY 28, 1942, FROM Mr RACZYNSKI, POLISH MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS, TO AMBASSADOR BOGOMOLOV, CONCERNING THE FAILURE TO SET FREE A NUMBER OF POLISH CITIZENS, AND SPECIFICALLY A NUMBER OF POLISH OFFICERS.

The Polish Government regrets to have to bring to Your Excellency's notice that, according to information just received, the liberation of Polish citizens detained on the territory of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics in labour camps and other places of detention has not been completely carried out. In a number of cases the local administrative authorities of the Union do not apply in full the provisions of the Soviet Decree dated August 12, 1941.

In this respect I have the honour to mention in particular the painful fact that, of all the officers and soldiers registered in the prisoner of war camps of Kozielsk, Starobielsk and Ostashkov, 12 generals, 94 colonels, 263 majors and about 7,800 officers of lesser rank have so far not yet been set free. It must be emphasized that investigations carried out in Poland and in the Reich have made it possible to establish definitely that these soldiers are not at present in occupied Poland, nor in prisoner-of-war camps in Germany.

According to fragmentary information that has reached us, a certain number of these prisoners find themselves in extremely hard circumstances on Franz Joseph Land, Nova Zemla and on the territory of the Yakut Republic on the banks of the Kolyma river.

EXCERPT OF THE NOTE OF MARCH 13, 1942, FROM AMBASSADOR BOGOMOLOV TO MR. RACZYNSKI, POLISH MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS, IN REPLY TO HIS NOTE OF JANUARY 28, 1942.

. . . The Soviet Government cannot agree to the statements contained in Your Excellency's Note. . .

. . In the reply by M. V M. Molotov's Note of November 8, 1941, addressed to M. Kot, and in the Aide-Mémoire of the People's Commissariat for Foreign Affairs of November 19, it had already been announced that the amnesty to Polish citizens had been strictly carried out. An appropriate investigation conducted by competent Soviet authorities after the conversation held on December 4, 1941, between the Polish Prime Minister, General Sikorski, and the Chairman of the People's Commissars of the U S S.R., J. V. Stalin, completely confirmed the above statement, besides the People's Commissar in the spirit of his Note No 6 of January 9, 1942, addressed to the Embassy of the Republic of Poland, gave additional detailed explanations on the carrying out of the amnesty in favour of Polish citizens

As the Polish officers and soldiers were liberated on the same basis as other Polish citizens under the Decree of August 12, 1941, all that has been said above applies equally to the Polish officers and soldiers.

As regards the statements contained in Your Excellency's Note alleging that there are still Polish officers who have not yet been set free, and that some of them are on Franz-Joseph and Nova Zemla islands, and the banks of the River Kolyma, it must be stated that these assertions are without foundation and obviously based on inaccurate information In any case, whenever it is learned that there are certain isolated instances of delay in setting free Polish citizens, the competent Soviet authorities immediately take measures necessary for their release

EXCERPT OF THE POLISH NOTE OF JULY 6, 1942, PROTESTING AGAINST THE INFRINGEMENT OF THE DIPLOMATIC IMMUNITY OF THE POLISH EMBASSY'S DELE GATE IN ARCHANGEL, AND AGAINST THE ARREST OF HIS STAFF.

On July 2, 1942, at about 4 p.m., Mr Jozef Gruja, Polish Embassy Delegate in Archangel, 2nd Secretary of the Polish Embassy, was obliged to go on official business to Murmansk, leaving behind as his deputy in Archangel (in agreement with the local authorities) Mr. Waldemar Kuczynski, one of his officials A few hours after the Embassy Delegate had left, three officials of the People's Commissariat for Internal Affairs, accompanied by two women employed in the local Inturist Hotel, entered the office of the Archangel Delegate, carried out a thorough search and for several hours questioned the officials present in the Delegate's office Finally, according to information received by the Embassy, the officials of the People's Commissariat for Internal Affairs took the liberty of removing all the archives and official correspondence of the Embassy Delegate in Archangel, his seal and his money, and, after having arrested the officials of the Delegate's office, that is to say, the acting Embassy Delegate, Waldemar Kuczynski, the storekeeper, Anna Witkowska, the assistant storekeeper, Marjan Pytlak, and office-worker Zdzislawa Wojcik, they drove these persons away to an unknown destination, leaving with Mr Kuczynski's wife previously prepared documents concerning the search they had carried out.

NOTE OF JULY 19, 1942, FROM SOKOLNICKI, CHARGE D'AFFAIRES OF THE POLISH EMBASSY IN KUYBYSHEV, TO MR. A J. VYSHINSKY, DEPUTY CHAIRMAN OF THE COUNCIL OF PEOPLE'S COMMISSARS, ON THE UNILATERAL DECISION TO CLOSE THE OFFICES OF VARIOUS DELEGATES AND THE ARREST OF POLISH EMBASSY DELEGATES IN THE U.S S R.

Mr Chairman,

In the course of your conversation with the Polish Ambassador on July 8, 1942, when you discussed with him the latest actions of the Soviet authorities with regard to the network of local offices of Embassy Delegates established in accordance with the corresponding agreements between this Embassy and the People's Commissariat for Foreign Affairs, reference was made to the unilateral decision of the Soviet authorities to close the offices of the Delegates in Aldan-Yakutsky, Vladivostok, Archangel, and Saratov, the arrest of Mr M. Zalenski, 1st Secretary of Embassy, acting Embassy Delegate in Vladivostok, the arrest of the entire staff of the office of the Embassy Delegate in Archangel, searches carried out in the offices of the Embassy Delegates in Vladivostok and Archangel, the violation of the immunity of the Embassy's archives in the offices of these Delegates, the seizure by the local authorities of a number of documents, of money and of seals belonging to the Embassy, and the closing and sealing of the Embassy's stores. In the course of this conversation the Polish Ambassador asked a question, which I now again put to you, that is, do the above actions of the Soviet authorities denote a change in the policy of the Soviet Government as initiated on July 30, 1941, in respect of that portion of the Polish population, which as a result of well known events found itself forcibly on the territory of the Soviet Union? It is the opinion of the Ambassador that if this action on the part of the Soviet Authorities was aimed at the destruction of the entire welfare and relief organization for Polish citizens in the U.S.S.R, created with such difficulty by this Embassy in agreement with the People's Commissariat, then it would be better to state this clearly instead of creating a fictitious situation in which one cannot be certain of the fate either of people or of institutions

It was to be inferred from your reply, Mr Chairman, that the Soviet Government did not propose to change the attitude that it had hitherto adopted towards Polish citizens in the U S.S R and their relief organization set up by this Embassy, and that general conclusions should not be drawn from specific cases based on misunderstandings of local officials or resulting possibly from criminal actions of individuals.

During the ten days that have passed since the aforementioned conversation took place, this Embassy has been informed of new facts, which seem to signify that the organization of Embassy Delegates on the territory of the U S S R is actually being closed down; this is accompanied by the arrest of those members of this Embassy's staff who have been most active in bringing relief to Polish citizens in their districts, the seizure by the local authorities of official archives and documents of this Embassy, the blocking of this Embassy's accounts in branches of the State Bank of the U S S.R, the closing and sealing by the Soviet authorities of warehouses containing relief goods from the Allied States addressed to the Embassy of the Republic of Poland in the U.S.S.R.

Apart from the arrest of Mr. M Zalenski, 1st Secretary of Embassy, Mr. Gruja, 2nd Secretary of Embassy and the staff of the Delegate's office in Archangel, already the subject of separate diplomatic correspondence,

I am obliged, Mr Chairman, to bring the following further facts to your notice :

On July 16, 1942, this Embassy received news of a search having been carried out by the local authorities in the office of the Embassy Delegate in Barnaul, the arrest of the Embassy Delegate Dr. J. Mattoszko and his staff, M. Siedlecki, D Wajgetner, J. Kowalewski and K. Bartosz, and of the seizure by these same authorities of the archives and seal of the Delegate's office and the closing of the Embassy's current account in the local branch of the State Bank.

On July 17, 1942, this Embassy received news of a search having been carried out by the local authorities in the office of the Embassy Delegate in Samarkand and the arrest of Mr M Heitzman, Attache of Embassy, who enjoys diplomatic immunity, and of the Delegate's staff, K. Kazimierczak, F Kowol, K. Jaroszewski, and F. Mantel.

On July 18, 1942, this Embassy received news of a search having been carried out by the local authorities in the office of the Embassy Delegate in Kirov, where is located the greatest clearing warehouse on the territory of the U.S S.R. for goods arriving from Allied States for the Polish Embassy in the U S S.R. At the same time Mr. A. Wisinski, the Embassy Delegate in Kirov, whose appointment to this post received the approval of the People's Commissariat for Foreign Affairs on June 26, 1942, was arrested, together with his staff, T. Slucki, F. Dubrowski, S. Fink and Z. Piotrowski.

On July 19, 1942, this Embassy received news that the office of the Embassy Delegate in Petropavlovsk had been *de facto* deprived of its freedom of action, while stores of relief goods sent to the Polish Embassy from Allied States, located at the station of Mamlutka, were closed and sealed by the local authorities.

On the same day, this Embassy received similar information concerning the office of the Embassy Delegate in Syktyvkar, where Dr. Winiarczyk, the Embassy Delegate, was arrested.

Further details of the aforementioned steps taken by the Soviet Authorities with regard to the local offices of this Embassy are as yet unknown to me. I do, however, possess information to the effect that telegrams addressed to this Embassy and containing reports on these events, are not delivered to this Embassy and that this Embassy's telegrams to certain of its Delegates and representatives are being intercepted The dispatches in question included those sent by the Ambassador and intercepted and not delivered to Attaches of Embassy Ploski and Lickindorf and to Secretaries of Embassy Glogowski and Gruja, which contained instructions in accordance with the contents of this Embassy's Note to the People's Commissariat for Foreign Affairs of July 10, 1942, No D 2871/42. This constitutes a new infringement of diplomatic immunity and privileges, established by law and international custom.

Though I intend to return to each of the matters just mentioned on receipt of more concrete and detailed information, I have, perforce, to limit myself at present to protesting against the action of the Soviet authorities in closing down the Embassy's relief organization ; and to insist that the Delegates and their staffs who have been arrested be immediately set free, and that the archives, seals and money belonging to the Embassy be returned.

At the same time I have to state that, as a consequence of instructions issued by the Soviet Authorities during the last three weeks .

1. Four out of the twenty, that is 20% of the offices of Embassy Delegates established in agreement with the People's Commissariat for Foreign Affairs, namely, the offices of Embassy Delegates in Vladivostok,

Archangel, Aldan Yakutsky and Saratov have been closed down by unilateral order of the Soviet authorities.

2. According to information so far received by this Embassy, five other offices of this Embassy's Delegates, namely, those in Barnaul, Samarkand, Kirov, Petropavlovsk and Syktyvkar are *de facto* no longer able to function because the Soviet authorities have arrested most if not all of their staff

3 In this way the Soviet authorities have actually paralyzed the activity of 45% of all the Embassy Delegates, appointed in accordance with a joint agreement between the Embassy and the People's Commissariat for Foreign Affairs, and operating in districts where there are at present more than 170,000 Polish citizens, according to the as yet incomplete registration figures ,

4. In view of the fact that the offices of nine Embassy Delegates have been prevented from functioning, the issue of food and clothing to tens of thousands of Polish citizens, some of them in very difficult circumstances, has had to be stopped in the districts served by these Delegates The same applies to the distribution of financial aid to Polish citizens unfit for work Food, clothing, and medical stores, worth millions, and consisting of goods sent to the Polish Embassy in the U.S.S.R. from Allied States are left entirely unprotected Further shipments of food, clothing and medical supplies which are on their way to the offices of individual Delegates will no longer go to persons duly authorized to receive them. Preventive inoculation against typhus will have to be suspended. Homes for orphans and the aged, maintained by individual Delegates, will be left without suitable care.

5. In view of the fact that the relief activities of this Embassy's agencies are being formally or actually rendered impossible, the responsibility for every consequence of this action rests with the Soviet authorities

6 In view of the effective stopping, closing and sealing by the Soviet authorities of food, clothing and medical stores, collected at great expense and effort by the Polish Government, as well as by the Governments and peoples of the Allied States, destined for Polish citizens in the U.S S.R and delivered to Soviet ports by Polish and Allied sailors, who sacrificed much and risked their lives to accomplish this task—the responsibility for the destruction and deterioration of these goods which may ensue must also rest with the Soviet authorities.

NOTE OF JANUARY 16, 1943, FROM THE PEOPLE'S COMMISSARIAT FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF THE U.S.S R. TO THE POLISH EMBASSY IN KUYBYSHEV, CLAIMING AS SOVIET CITIZENS ALL PERSONS WHO ON NOVEMBER 1-2, 1939, FOUND THEMSELVES ON POLISH TERRITORIES OCCUPIED BY THE ARMED FORCES OF THE UNION OF SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLICS

The People's Commissariat for Foreign Affairs has the honor to inform the Embassy of the Polish Republic of the following ·

In connection with the exchange of Notes in the years 1941-1942 between the People's Commissariat for Foreign Affairs and the Embassy, concerning the citizenship of persons who previously lived in the Western districts of the Ukrainian and White Ruthenian Soviet Socialist Republics, the People's Commissariat for Foreign Affairs informed the Embassy on December 1, 1941, that all inhabitants of the above-mentioned districts who found themselves on the territories of these districts at the time of their entry into the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (November 1-2, 1939), had acquired Soviet citizenship in accordance with the Decree of the Supreme

Council of the U S S R. dated November 29, 1939, and the Citizenship of the U S S R. Act of August 19, 1938.

In its Note of December 1, 1941, the People's Commissariat for Foreign Affairs informed the Embassy that the Soviet Government were prepared, by way of exception, to regard as Polish citizens persons of Polish origin living in the territories of the above-mentioned districts on November 1-2, 1939 The People's Commissariat for Foreign Affairs is bound to state that, despite the good-will of the Soviet Government thus manifested, the Polish Government has adopted a negative attitude to the above statement of the Soviet Government and has refused to take the appropriate steps, putting forward demands contrary to the sovereign rights of the Soviet Union in respect to these territories

In connection with the above, the People's Commissariat for Foreign Affairs, on instructions from the Soviet Government, gives notice that the statement included in the Note of December 1, 1941, regarding the readiness to treat some categories of persons of Polish origin on an exceptional basis must be considered as without validity and that the question of the possible non-application to such persons of the laws governing citizenship of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics has ceased to exist

EXCERPT FROM THE NOTE OF MARCH 8, 1943, FROM THE POLISH EMBASSY IN KUYBYSHEV TO THE PEOPLE'S COMMISSARIAT FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS, CONCERNING THE FORCING OF SOVIET CITIZENSHIP UPON POLISH CITIZENS.

The Embassy of the Republic of Poland has the honor to inform the People's Commissariat for Foreign Affairs that reports from a number of places in the U S.S R indicate that local Soviet authorities are employing methods of compulsion described in the Embassy's Note No. 307/21/43 of March 6, 1943

In the town of Syzran, district of Kuybyshev, officials of the People's Commissariat for Internal Affairs are threatening with imprisonment or confinement in labor camps all Polish citizens who refuse to accept Soviet passports. Endeavours are also being made to persuade those who resist by the argument that "Poland no longer exists," which is flagrantly inconsistent with the obligations undertaken by the Government of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics Those refusing to accept Soviet citizenship are as a rule kept in confinement without food or water until they sign a document agreeing to accept a Soviet passport.

Similar reports are coming in from the Krasnoyarsky Kray, and the Kirov, Kuybyshev and Akmolinsk districts. In the town of Kuybyshev three inmates of the Embassy's Home for Invalids are still under detention without food or drink.

Fragmentary information which has succeeded in reaching the Embassy indicates that many hundreds of persons have been affected by these arrests.

EXCERPTS FROM AMBASSADOR ROMER'S CONVERSATION WITH PREMIER STALIN AND MOLOTOV, PEOPLE'S COMMISSAR FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS, AT THE KREMLIN DURING THE NIGHT OF FEBRUARY 26-27, 1943.

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Romer: I should still like to discuss the problem of Polish-Soviet relations which unfortunately are passing through a crisis, causing anxiety. We have just ended a friendly discussion on a number of important subjects dealing with military collaboration between our countries. But such

collaboration can actually bear fruit only as and when accompanied by mutual friendly feeling. First of all in this connection, the fate of Polish citizens in the Soviet Union is of special interest to the Polish Government and public opinion The Soviet Note of January 16, 1943, introduced new and unexpected elements and implications which have filled us with deep concern and which it is my duty to elucidate in this conversation with you, Mr. President.

Stalin : I am listening, please

Romer : As a result of the Agreement of July 30, 1941, the amnesty proclaimed by the Soviet Government affected a vast number of Polish citizens, not excluding national minorities, whose Polish citizenship was only called into question on December 1, 1941, in a note of the People's Commissariat for Foreign Affairs Set free from camps and prisons our citizens began to rally en masse to the Polish Army then in formation. With the assistance of the Governments of the United States and Great Britain, and of a number of social welfare organizations and institutions, the Polish Government organized relief work on a large scale for their families and for those who remained at work in their places of exile The need for this relief did not in the least imply a desire to assure to the Polish population an existence in any way privileged as compared with their surroundings, nor even an allegation, never put forward by us, that Polish deportees received worse treatment at the hands of the Soviet authorities than the local population Their position was worse for other reasons They had been deported at an hour's notice and as a rule with no money, clothing or food, torn away by force from the surroundings in which they had grown up. Frequently they were separated from their families and were taken under most difficult circumstances to distant, foreign countries, often with extremely severe climates differing greatly from that to which they were accustomed. They were settled among an alien people whose language and customs were foreign to them, and where they lacked the adequate living quarters and vegetable gardens at the disposal of the local population. They were made to do work of which they had no previous experience, for instance intellectuals were given heavy manual work which they had never done before. They were also suffering from disease. For these reasons relief in the form of food, clothing and medical supplies was and remains an absolute necessity.

Stalin : Whom do you refer to as the Polish population, Mr. Ambassador ? The whole Polish population which found itself in Western Ukraine and Western White Ruthenia ?

Romer : According to Polish legislation, I consider as Polish citizens all those persons who possessed Polish citizenship in 1939. There is a difference of opinion between our two Governments on this subject, the more so since, as was made clear by the Soviet Note of January 16, 1943, and its interpretation which I heard from Commissar Molotov several days ago, the Soviets extended their citizenship to all persons who were in the disputed territories on November 1 and 2, 1939, even if they found themselves there quite temporarily and by accident and had no connection whatever with the place where they were staying.

Molotov : That is not exact There is reference in the Note to the Citizenship Act which differentiates between permanent and temporary residents . the former have become citizens of the Soviet Union by virtue of the law, while the citizenship of the latter is a matter for individual examination

Romer : The Note of January 16, 1943, states quite explicitly that all persons present in the disputed territories desired Soviet citizenship

Stalin : But at the same time there is reference to the Soviet Citizenship Act.

Romer : May I remark that we have received a number of Notes from the People's Commissariat for Foreign Affairs stating that all residents in these districts have become Soviet citizens. The Polish Embassy in Kuybyshev has even received a written warning that intervention on behalf of individual persons will not be considered until evidence is produced showing the whereabouts of such persons on November 1 and 2, 1939

Stalin : Distinction is made between those who happened to be in those territories and those who lived there permanently.

Molotov : Citizens of a number of States could have been there at the time, as for example Rumanians, Hungarians, Frenchmen and others, but obviously they did not acquire Soviet citizenship on this account. Our Constitution provides distinctly for such eventualities, which, however, have to be examined individually

Romer : This is an entirely new situation to me. I find this interpretation, which I hear for the first time, extremely interesting. Hitherto, ever since its Note of December 1, 1941, the Soviet Government has adhered consistently to the attitude that especially that category of Polish citizens who found themselves in the territories in question at the time specified, acquired Soviet citizenship.

Stalin : Excuse me, Mr. Ambassador, but persons whose presence in these territories was merely transitory did not automatically acquire Soviet citizenship.

Romer : I can quote a whole series of concrete cases of the attitude hitherto held by the Soviet Government. I do not remember them all, but a classical example is that of the two Warsaw city councillors, Alter and Erlich, who despite our objections and representations were classified as Soviet citizens.

Molotov : There may have been individual cases

Romer : What is then the official Soviet interpretation in this matter, Mr. President? All Soviet Notes and statements have indicated hitherto that in practice all Polish citizens in the U S S R have lost their citizenship. We cannot agree to that

Stalin : The Polish Government persists in considering as Polish citizens all Poles now in the U.S S R That is wrong. Truly, a number of Soviet offices have overstepped their authority in certain individual cases, but we must put a stop to extremes. I must moreover point out that it also depends on the person concerned what citizenship he wishes to choose Thus everybody must be asked. Take, Mr. Ambassador, the example of Wanda Wasilewska, a Pole from Warsaw who considers herself a Soviet citizen The people's wishes must be given consideration, one cannot force citizenship upon them. There is in our Note a reference to the Citizenship Act. I must admit that not all Soviet bureaus have always acted along uniform lines and correctly. But not all the Poles who lived and were domiciled in Polish territory will be Polish citizens. That has to be stopped. There are some who are coming over to us.

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Romer : Many Poles, Soviet citizens, have lived in the territories of the U.S.S.R. for many years. We do not claim them, nor have we ever raised this question.

Stalin : I was thinking of Poles domiciled in the western parts of the Ukraine and White Ruthenia.

Romer : I therefore note, Mr. President, that you recognize the will of each person concerned as an important element in determining his or her

citizenship. On our part we shall gladly agree to such a criterion, for we have no desire to have citizens who do not wish to be Polish citizens I must, however, emphasize that a large number of practical issues are bound up with the citizenship problem. Of these I will mention the continuation of relief to our people and permission for individuals to go abroad without of course burdening Soviet railways engaged in war transport. I have in mind particularly Polish children and the families still left in the U S S.R of soldiers serving in the Polish Army in Great Britain and in the Near East, and also families of Polish State officials and welfare workers The fact that they are separated from their bread winners can neither be explained nor understood by any one

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Romer : Reverting to the subject of citizenship, in view of the practical consequences involved for hundreds of thousands of our people and thus also for Polish-Soviet relations, I must insist that this be settled not unilaterally but by mutual agreement between our two governments. It is unthinkable that a large and valuable portion of our Nation be thus abruptly cut off against its will from the rest

Stalin : If we consider the Ukrainians and White Ruthenians as nations, we must recognize that a reunion (*vossoyedinenie*) has taken place between the lands they inhabit and Soviet White Ruthenia and Soviet Ukraine Surely the Ukrainians are not Poles ! Surely the White Ruthenians are not Poles ! We have not joined a single Polish province to the Soviet Union All Polish territories have been occupied by the Germans

Romer : Since you refer to the plebiscites in our Eastern provinces, Mr. President, I must recall that they were carried out within the boundaries set up by the German-Soviet agreement which was subsequently solemnly repudiated in the Polish-Soviet Agreement of July 30, 1941

Stalin : It was the German attack on the U.S.S.R. that rendered the German-Soviet agreement invalid, and especially the non-aggression pact

Romer : At the time the Soviet Union took our territory we were in opposite camps, and we have not recognized any acts of violence committed at our expense. Since July 30, 1941, we are in the same anti-German camp, which entitles us to expect that no changes will be made in the lands that are ours or in our fundamental rights without our agreement. In default of this we must maintain the attitude that the former Polish-Soviet frontiers, established by the Treaty of Riga, remain always in force . .

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Romer : We must have a friendly discussion on all subjects of friction between our two Governments, a friction that is of no benefit to either party but only serves Germany. It is in such a spirit that the problems connected with relief for Polish citizens in the U S S.R. and with their departure should be discussed.

Stalin : What problems ?

Romer : This is a historical moment which will decide the course of Polish-Soviet relations for many years to come We must approach the decisions it calls for with mutual and full understanding and good will, excluding for the time being from our discussions such matters as cannot now be decided and which, if raised, merely lead to friction in Polish-Soviet relations and provoke public controversies.

Stalin : The Soviet Government keeps consistently silent on the subject and so should the Polish Government.

Romer : It is easier to remain silent when one is acquiring something than when one is losing it. As a result of the Soviet Note of January 16, 1943, we are threatened with a loss of several hundred thousands of our

citizens who are all the more important to us as we have lost so many at the hands of the Germans Furthermore we are threatened with the loss on Soviet initiative of the whole eastern part of our territory. No wonder, then, that Polish public opinion is embittered.

Stalin : The territory we have lost is larger than the whole of Poland.

Romer : But the Red Army has already reconquered vast regions and will undoubtedly regain everything. And, moreover, these territories are only a small part of the Soviet Union.

Stalin : Mr. Ambassador, after the Red Army has beaten the Germans on Russian soil it will enter Polish territory and help to chase the Germans out of Poland and then it will immediately return these lands to the Polish Government, and then, Mr Ambassador, will you say that this will be a unilateral action adversely affecting good mutual relations ?

Romer : It will not be as bad as that.

Stalin : Mr Ambassador, we want a strong Poland, we shall give you the whole of German-occupied Poland regardless of the fact that we are being insulted (*niesmotria na to tshto nas rugayut*). But we can take these insults on our shoulders !

Romer : Thank you, Mr. President, for those words I shall remember them. And do you agree with me as to the need for coming to a mutual agreement regarding the problem of the citizenship of Poles at present in the U.S.S R. and of further relief and assistance for them from our own resources ?

Stalin : There will be Poles who wish to acquire Soviet citizenship.

Molotov : We are, of course, referring to citizens other than those from Western Ukrainian or Western White Ruthenian territories This problem should furthermore be examined for the purpose of determining the citizenship of persons whose presence in those territories was only temporary.

Romer : According to what Mr. President has said, the will of the persons concerned must be given consideration. Since on the strength of an understanding between the two governments it will be made possible for such persons to express their wishes quite freely, I have no doubt that the atmosphere will be easily and smoothly cleared, since all those in whom we are interested will never reconcile themselves to the thought of parting with their Polish citizenship

Stalin : It must nevertheless be carried out in accordance with our legislation relating to citizenship. The problem of persons serving in the Red Army presents another difficulty. Out of a desire to evade further service, they may express their wish to go, say to Australia in the capacity of Polish citizens. Desertion might thus be facilitated. Apart from the will of the persons concerned, other considerations will therefore have to be taken into account. The nationality of such people and their origin will have to be looked into

Romer : A problem of vital interest to me in this connection is that of our children. There are several tens of thousands in the Soviet Union and they will be of great value to the future of resurrected Poland. From the point of view of bringing to agreement our conflicting views on citizenship, we attach great importance to the fate of the orphans. We should like to make it possible for these orphans to go to other countries where they would find favourable conditions of existence and education and be a minimum financial burden to the Polish Government.

Stalin : In accordance with our legislation this depends on a variety of factors It is difficult to generalise

Romer : I think that the problem of citizenship can only be resolved by means of a formal, bilateral agreement.

Stalin : We cannot infringe our laws.

.

Molotov : A declaration of the Polish Government was published in London yesterday. Its contents are unfriendly to the Soviet Union.

Stalin : The declaration is more than a newspaper reply. It is in fact an official statement (*eto zayavlenye*) Where Soviet territory is concerned there is no Soviet Government prepared to waive (*otkazalsia by*) any provisions of our Constitution And the adherence of Western Ukraine and Western White Ruthenia to the Soviet Union has been included in the Constitution

Romer : On the other hand you will not find a single Pole who would deny that Wilno and Lwów are Polish. I myself so declare it in your presence, Mr President, with the fullest conviction.

Stalin : I understand your viewpoint. We also have ours. We are quits

EXCERPTS FROM AMBASSADOR ROMER'S CONVERSATION WITH MOLOTOV, PEOPLE'S COMMISSAR FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS, AT THE KREMLIN ON MARCH 9, 1943

Romer : Before entering upon the actual subject of our conversation to-day I regret to have to communicate to you a number of events which to my painful surprise have recently occurred in this territory.

The arrests of local representatives of the Embassy continued throughout the whole second half of 1942 and increased in number in January and February last In these two months twenty-one representatives were arrested whose names, previously, had been regularly made known to the People's Commissariat for Foreign Affairs, and who, for the most part, had been confirmed in their functions. The Embassy has not, in one single instance, been informed of these arrests, nor of the reasons thereof.

The authorities have begun to carry out the instructions contained in the Note of the People's Commissariat for Foreign Affairs of January 16 last, concerning citizenship. They are forcing Polish citizens to accept Soviet passports At Kirov, employees at the local Embassy warehouse were summoned to take out Soviet passports. The vast majority of these employees refused to do so and were arrested together with their families. One of our largest warehouses serving a wide expanse of territory in the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics was thus deprived of its staff and immobilized. In this connection it must be noted that the fate of shipments of relief goods sent from abroad for the Polish population and already under way from Archangel has not yet been ascertained.

A similar procedure was applied at Kirov and Kustanay with regard to all Polish citizens living there; the number of those arrested in these circumstances already amounts to about two hundred.

The same principles are applied with regard to families of members of the Polish armed forces now on active service in Great Britain and the Near East. Thus the People's Commissariat for Foreign Affairs refused to allow a group of families of Polish military men to leave the Soviet Union, although before my departure from Kuybyshev, to be precise on December 23, 1942, that is to say before the issue of the Soviet Note of January 16, 1943, I had received the most formal undertakings from Deputy Commissar Vyshinsky on behalf of the Soviet Government that the permission would be granted.

Throughout the territories of the U.S.S.R., Polish welfare institutions, such as orphanages, homes for invalids, etc., are being sovietized. The home for invalids and the orphanage at Bolshaya Konstantinovka in the Kuibyshev area were taken over in the following circumstances. On

February 22, 1943, a Commission composed of members of district and regional authorities arrived on the spot and demanded the handing over of the administration of the institution They declared that these proceedings had been agreed to by the Embassy. In other similar cases the authorities declared that the Embassy no longer existed.

Subsequently, the whole personnel and the adult inmates of the institution were summoned to accept Soviet passports. Terrorized and yielding to direct threats twelve old and ailing persons accepted the Soviet passports. All the other adults in the institution, numbering about thirty, were ousted from the building Later a schoolmistress arrived She is, according to information received, of Volga-German origin. Lessons are in Russian only. The children, regardless of nationality, refuse to be taught in Russian and, despite orders and threats, they sing religious hymns and national songs in Polish.

Before I report on these cases to my Government, I should like to ask you, Mr. Commissar, whether you have any knowledge of these facts and whether they have occurred with the knowledge and consent of the Soviet Government ?

Molotov : I have not heard anything about the facts you mention, Mr. Ambassador. I will now reply to your statements, dividing my remarks in two parts .

First · I would advise that the Embassy instruct its representatives throughout the country to conform to the Note of January 16. There will be much less misunderstandings if the principles laid down in our Note were applied, making it possible to avoid all incidents.

Second : As regards specific cases in which the Note of January 16 was applied, it is not excluded that local authorities may have carried it out wrongly. For instance, inhabitants of Warsaw do not as a matter of law become Soviet citizens. Such cases of a faulty interpretation of the Note may have occurred, but they were quite accidental. If mistakes were made, they will be rectified. I can assure you of this, Mr Ambassador.

Romer : I must remark that the Note of January 16 does not say anything about the taking over by Soviet authorities of Embassy institutions, such as orphanages, homes for invalids, and that we were never notified about this. I must further emphasize in this connection that the local authorities are taking over property owned by the Polish State and I don't know on what grounds this is being done. As for the Note of January 16, it refers exclusively to the legal position of persons regarding themselves and also regarded by us as Polish citizens and on whom Soviet citizenship is now being forced. . . .

.

Romer : On what legal grounds are orphanages and other Embassy institutions being taken over by the Soviet administration ?

Molotov : If we establish that Soviet citizens are found there, then these institutions become subject to appropriation by the Soviet authorities. I desire, Mr. Ambassador, to leave no room for misunderstanding in these matters.

Romer : These institutions and everything belonging to them are the property of the Polish State. As far as citizenship is concerned, however, from our point of view, these people are Polish citizens and, in part, would also seem to remain Polish citizens, even from the Soviet viewpoint. The state of affairs thus created is quite inadmissible. . .

.

Romer : I am forced to inform my Government about these facts. If we are to discuss in a friendly spirit questions relating to citizenship, in accord-

ance with what was agreed on in my conversation with Marshal Stalin, then I must ask you, Mr. Commissar, what interest can the Soviet Government possibly have in arousing Polish public opinion, and also in exciting public opinion abroad where these facts will undoubtedly become known? I have precise information showing that the local authorities deal with these matters drastically. I think the only reasonable solution corresponding to the spirit of my conversation with Marshal Stalin and with you would be the suspension of all steps of this nature by the local Soviet authorities, at least for the period of the negotiations we are to conduct.

Molotov: The local authorities who received instructions on the grounds of the Note of January 16 must put them into operation For these authorities the question is not controversial at all and it is their duty to carry out their instructions. The way in which this was done may, indeed, have provoked friction But I must assure you that it is the intention of the Soviet Government that conditions of life of the Polish population not only shall not suffer any deterioration but on the contrary be improved.

Romer: I must state once again, that the manner in which these instructions are carried out by the local authorities has been extremely ruthless, and they are applied to matters that have not been agreed upon between us, although the authorities concerned referred to an alleged consent of the Embassy I see no grounds whatever for taking over welfare institutions of the Embassy and Polish State property assigned to them.

Romer: And what in your view will be the possibilities of distinguishing between the two categories of people, those who for both sides are and remain indisputably Polish citizens, and those whom the Soviet Government now considers Soviet citizens?

Molotov: This problem is purely practical It will be dealt with within the scope of our legislation

Romer: I have precise information, Mr. Commissar, that Polish citizens are being arrested for not accepting Soviet passports and I am unable to reconcile this procedure with the stand taken by Marshal Stalin in his conversation with me.

Molotov: You simplify this matter, Mr. Ambassador The moment is difficult. Truly there is friction. If a Pole resists the orders of Soviet authorities, we shall deal with that as with a hostile action

Romer: In the cases on which we have most detailed reports, the Soviet authorities failed to take into account the will of individuals. Whereas, during my conversation with Marshal Stalin, the latter laid emphasis on the fact that precisely this factor would have to be taken into serious consideration. We, on our part, give due attention to this circumstance, and therefore you, Mr. Commissar, will not, for instance, have to deal with any claim on our part with regard to the citizenship of Wanda Wasilewska, of whose case mention was made.

Molotov: Your reference to Marshal Stalin is incorrect. Comrade Stalin spoke of two factors and you, Mr. Ambassador, mention only one. Stalin said that one must take into consideration . first, Soviet legislation, and second, the will of the citizen. As to Wanda Wasilewska, she voluntarily accepted Soviet citizenship although she was born in Warsaw

Romer: I very well remember the stand taken by Marshal Stalin and I must emphasize that the Soviet authorities only count with the one of the two factors which, according to the Marshal, were to influence the determination of citizenship, namely, Soviet legislation; but they totally

ignore the second factor, the will of the person concerned. Therefore, even in the light of Marshal Stalin's explanations, the procedure applied by the authorities is unfair and unjust.

Molotov: We will verify all these facts, and I will inform you of the outcome

EXCERPTS FROM AMBASSADOR ROMER'S CONVERSATION WITH MOLOTOV AT THE KREMLIN, ON MARCH 18, 1943.

Romer: The facts I have to bring to your notice are very painful, because they do not show that the Soviet authorities act in a way consistent with the spirit of friendship that ought to be the rule between our two governments. I shall divide these facts into the following categories:

First. The forcing of Soviet citizenship about which we already have information, fragmentary but sufficient to draw the conclusion that this is a mass procedure ordered by the central authorities and applied to the entire Polish population in the U S S R This procedure is carried out on lines of moral and physical compulsion that arouse my deepest indignation, as being inadmissible in relations between Allies and in the midst of a hard war against our common enemy We have proof that Polish citizens, men and women, subjected to this procedure are detained for examination for days on end, that they are even deprived of food and drink to break their resistance. Such arguments are made use of for this purpose, as statements that there is no longer any Polish Embassy in the U S S.R., or that Poland no longer exists Those who resist are thrown into prison. Local authorities do not, as a rule, investigate the place of origin of a given person, and consequently do not respect the differentiation implied in the interpretation of the Soviet law on citizenship that I received from Marshal Stalin and from you.

Second: The taking over by the Soviet authorities, Mr. Commissar, of the relief institutions of the Polish Embassy, a proceeding likewise carried out on a mass scale These institutions—they number about 570—were created and operated on the basis of agreements between the People's Commissariat for Foreign Affairs and the Embassy, they were subordinated exclusively to the latter and had at their disposal, in all cases—in larger or smaller measure—Polish State property, equipment, supplies of food, clothing and medicines, school utensils, etc. On grounds unknown to me and in a totally inadmissible manner, the Soviet authorities are taking over these institutions and disposing of them and also of Polish property without the consent of the Embassy, to whom the rightful ownership of and control over these objects belongs. They do not even give any warning of what they intend to do As regards the taking over the home for invalids and orphanage at Bolshaya Konstantinovka, in the Kuybyshev district, under conditions I described to you during our last interview, the Embassy has received a Note from the People's Commissariat for Foreign Affairs, dated March 10, giving as justification for all this that no Polish citizens were found there. This allegation has no foundation in truth. It was precisely Polish citizens refusing to accept Soviet passports who together with the manager of the establishment were expelled from it. The citizenship of children was obviously decided by higher authorities without any investigation, despite opposition put up by the children themselves. I am therefore compelled to state once again, that methods of actual terrorism were employed by the local authorities, methods wholly incompatible with the spirit of Polish-Soviet friendship and collaboration.

Molotov: Mr. Ambassador, it is very easy to speak about friendly understanding in the matter of incidents that have occurred, but here I do

not see anything of this sort on your part. Your reproaches on this subject are unfounded and out of place. I shall not reply to them.

However, as regards Polish State property, I already told you the last time and I repeat once more, that all losses will be made good.

If the Embassy should obstruct our action, the result will be anything but good. I see that you do not want to get reconciled to our standpoint, and the Embassy still continues to follow its old line of procedure. This has nothing to do with assurances of friendship. I must remark that the Embassy's attitude towards these problems is strange, for it does not issue instructions in accordance with our laws. No good can result from this. All this is quite incomprehensible to me

Romer : Your expostulation, Mr. Commissar, I shall answer later when I substantiate my statement with facts. I will now submit to your consideration a further series of facts, and, in doing so, I would—in connection with point three—emphasize that the Embassy has been exposed of late to various vexations and difficulties. Even I, personally, have trouble when I speak over the telephone with Kuybyshev. Long distance telephone calls of the Embassy are not attended to. An ever increasing number of telegrams from outlying places are not delivered to the Embassy. Callers leaving the Embassy are forced to show their identity papers and are arrested. Worse, cases are known in which such persons have been beaten up in public. If you so desire, I can give further particulars as well as the dates of the incidents. Families of Embassy officials and of employees of institutions under it in outlying districts are forced to accept Soviet passports. . .

I will now revert to the matter touched on by you, Mr. Commissar, concerning the taking over of relief institutions by the Soviet authorities. I am obliged to emphasize, once more, that the Embassy never agreed thereto and was not even notified by the People's Commissariat for Foreign Affairs in this matter, and that a policy of accomplished fact is being applied The institutions are closed down before the question of citizenship of the staff and inmates has been established This is not indicative of any good will on the part of the Soviet Government. I suggest, on my part, that the local authorities discontinue this action at least until our conversations have been brought to a close, as they are intended to bring about a friendly settlement of pending difficulties. At the present juncture it is difficult to arrive at an understanding. Whilst we are discussing questions of principle, things are happening out there in the provinces that are apt to change the whole situation The Polish Government cannot be indifferent to these happenings.

Molotov : I would like to ask, Mr Ambassador, at what you are actually aiming ? We shall verify the individual facts mentioned by you. (Molotov repeats this twice.) What more can you wish ? If you start by not recognizing our laws, then all attempts to achieve an understanding will be futile. From the conversations we have had hitherto I have gained the impression that you continue uninterruptedly to maintain your standpoint of not recognizing the Decree of November 29, 1939.

You certainly do not possess, Mr Ambassador, general information as to how this whole action is being carried out.

Romer : On the contrary, Mr. Commissar, I have a large number of facts affecting not only Embassy officials. I can for instance mention the case of Mrs. Sigmund, born and domiciled in Warsaw, now residing at Kustanay, a daughter of the well-known writer Adolph Nowaczynski.

Molotov : We will verify these facts.

Romer : Persons who know beyond any doubt that even within the

meaning of the Decree they may retain their Polish citizenship and who consequently refuse to accept Soviet passports, are sentenced to imprisonment for this in violation of every principle of law. I can in this respect refer to the cases of three employees of the Embassy's warehouse at Kirov who were sentenced each to two years in prison.

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